

CRAIG KAUFFMAN
NEW WORK

OCTOBER 27 THROUGH DECEMBER 2, 1995

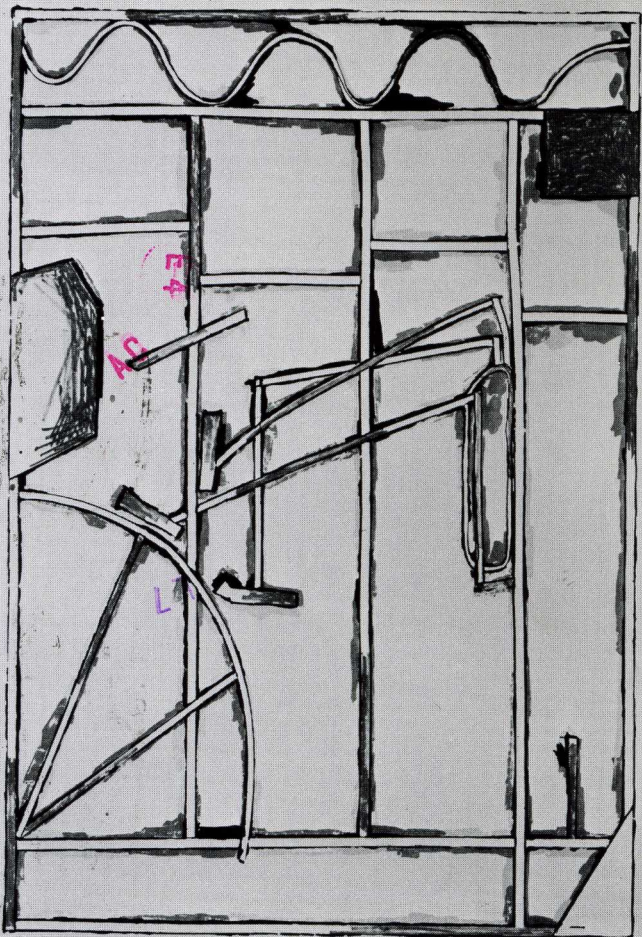
RECEPTION FOR THE ARTIST
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27
6 TO 8PM

PATRICIA FAURE GALLERY

BERGAMOT STATION

2525 MICHIGAN AVENUE B7 SANTA MONICA CA 90404

TEL 310 449 1479 FAX 310 828 7270



**CRAIG
KAUFFMAN**

**New Paintings
March 21 to
April 18, 1981**

**ASHER/FAURE
8221 Santa Monica
Boulevard
Los Angeles, 90046
213 654/6214**

ONE-MAN

Galerie
Darthea
Speyer

6 rue Jacques Callot
75006 Paris
Tél. 033-78-41

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Kauffman

vernissage le mardi 5 octobre de 18 à 21 h 5.10. - 30.10.76

ONE MAN

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ROBERT CRAIG KAUFFMAN

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ONE-MAN

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vernissage
le mardi 6 mars
de 18 h 21 h

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CRAIG KAUFFMAN
PAINTED DRAWINGS

Project Room: Jacob Hashimoto

december 5 through january 16
reception saturday, december 5, 4 to 6 pm

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Craig Kauffman

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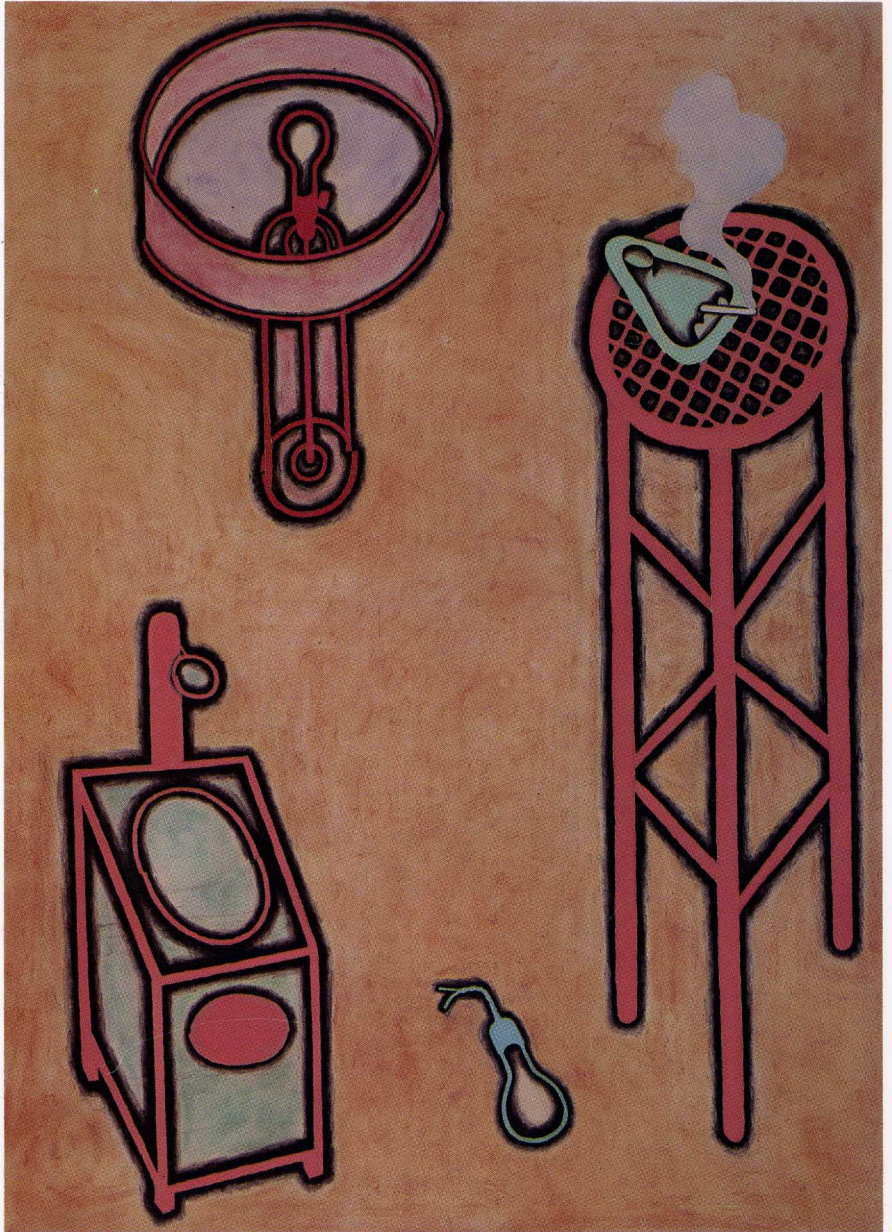
FEB 9 1979

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OPENING SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1979

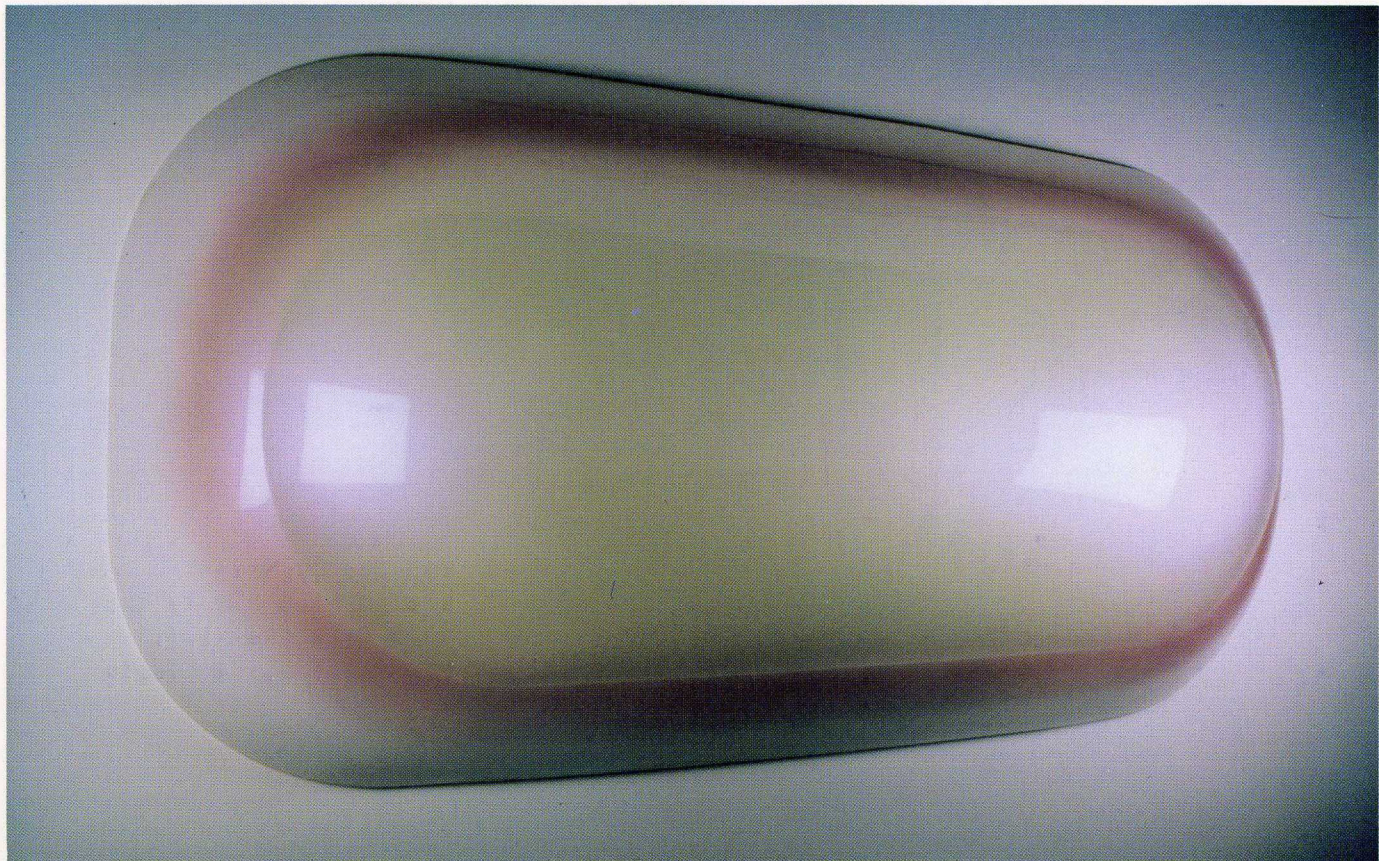
BlumHelman

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mica jello blatant jello western jello hop
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eather jello oh you kid jello **craig kauffm
an** jello one up jello empty jello sitting je
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touch me jello **10 march – 5 april 1970** je
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up jello endless jello sleeping jello brea



STOOL WITH CIGARETTE 1984 oil and acrylic on silk mounted on canvas 66" x 48"

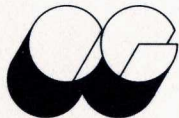




Craig Kauffman, UNTITLED, 1968-69, acrylic
lacquer on vacuum-formed plexiglass, 43x89x23"

Collection: Mr. & Mrs. Robert A. Rowan

CRAIG KAUFFMAN: WALL RELIEFS, 1967-'69
Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum



Comsky Gallery

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SATURDAY, MAY 15, 1976 2:30 – 5:00

EXHIBITION CONTINUES THROUGH JUNE 2, 1976

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GALLERY HOURS MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY 1:30 – 5:00

OR BY APPOINTMENT

CRAIG KAUFFMAN

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NOV. 1 - DEC. 8, 1979

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CRAIG KAUFFMAN: A COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY 1957-1980



THE OAKLAND MUSEUM ART SPECIAL GALLERY
FEBRUARY 24 THROUGH APRIL 18, 1982



ARMORY CENTER FOR THE ARTS

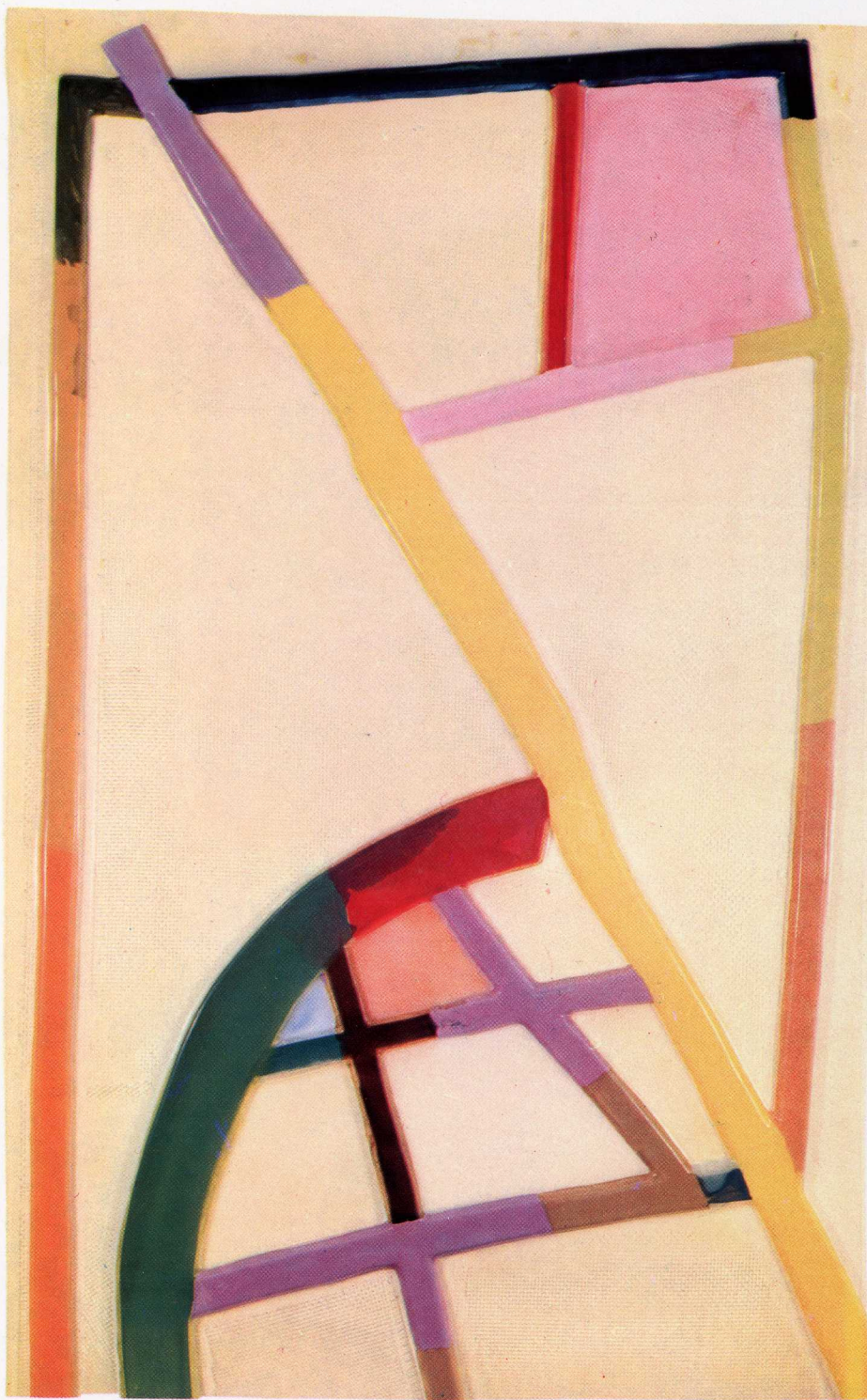
145 North Raymond Avenue Pasadena, California 91103
phone: 626.792.5101 fax: 626.449.0139 website: www.armoryarts.org

Please join us for a special opening of the exhibition
"Craig Kauffman: A Retrospective of Drawings" at the
Armory Center for the Arts, Saturday, September 20,
7 to 9 p.m. The exhibition will be on view through
November 16 in the Susan and John Caldwell Gallery
at the Armory, 145 North Raymond Avenue,
Pasadena, California.

Please RSVP by Monday, September 15, with the
number of guests at 626-792-5101 x 122 or
gallery@armoryarts.org.

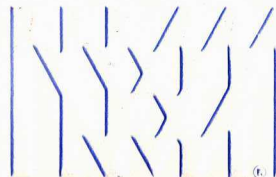
The exhibition is made possible by a generous grant
from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

A handwritten signature in green ink, consisting of several fluid, overlapping loops and lines.



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Craig Kauffman was born in Los Angeles in 1932. He attended the University of California and New York's School of Visual Arts. He now lives in Los Angeles. Kauffman's work has been exhibited in major museums throughout the world including the Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum, Los Angeles County Museum, Walker Art Center, Pasadena Art Museum, Tate Gallery, Albright-Knox Gallery and Milwaukee Art Center.



Craig Kauffman
at Pace Feb. 15, 1969

KAUFFMAN, CRAIG

LIBRARY
NOV 22 1985
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
MUSEUM OF ART



CRAIG KAUFFMAN

New Paintings

September 7 through October 5, 1985

Reception for the Artist: September 7, 3-5 p.m.

Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 11-5 p.m.

ASHER/FAURE

612 North Almont Drive

Los Angeles, CA 90069

(213) 271-3665

CRETIAN ROAD, 1979-85
oil on silk mounted on canvas
78" x 54"

CRAIG KAUFFMAN**Biography**

Born Los Angeles, 1932; lives in Laguna Beach, California. Studied University of Southern California, School of Architecture, 1950-1952; University of California at Los Angeles, M.A., 1956.

One Man Exhibitions

Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles, 1953.
 Dilexi Gallery, San Francisco, 1958, 1960.
 Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles, 1958, 1963, 1965, 1967.
 Pace Gallery, New York, 1967, 1969, 1970, 1973.
 Irving Blum Gallery, Los Angeles, 1969, 1972.
 Gallerie Darthea Speyer, Paris, 1973, 1976.
 Pasadena Museum of Modern Art, 1970.
 University of California at Irvine, 1970.
 Mizuno Gallery, Los Angeles, 1975.
 Robert Elkon Gallery, New York City, 1976.
 Comsky Gallery, Los Angeles, 1976.

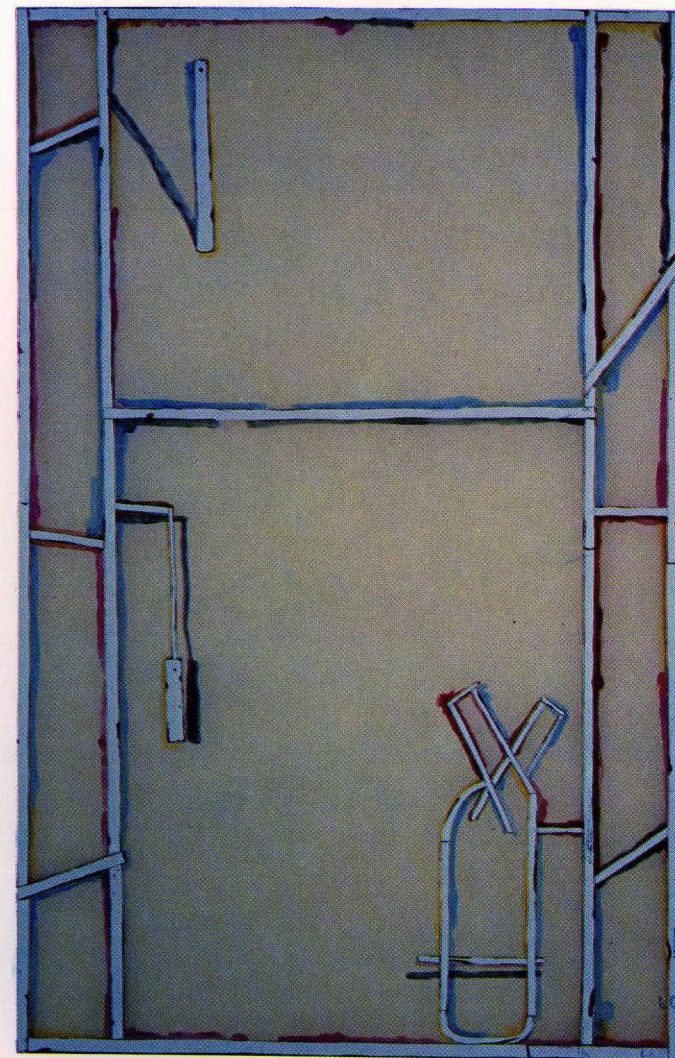
Selected Group Exhibitions

"Annual," Los Angeles County Fair, Pomona, California, 1951.
 Members Gallery, Museum of Modern Art, New York City, 1952.
 "Artists Under 35," Dickson Art Center, University of California at Los Angeles, 1959.
 "Annual," University of Illinois at Champaign, 1961.
 "5 at Pace," Pace Gallery, New York City, 1965.
 "Los Angeles Now," Robert Fraser Gallery, London, 1966.
 "Ten from Los Angeles," Seattle Art Museum, 1966.
 "Form, Color, Image," The Detroit Institute of Arts, 1967.
 "A New Aesthetic," Washington Gallery of Modern Art, Washington, D.C., 1967.
 "The 1960's," Museum of Modern Art, New York City, 1967.
 "V Paris Biennale," Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France, 1967; and Pasadena Museum of Modern Art, 1967.

"Recent Acquisitions," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City, 1968.
 "Sculpture Annual," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City, 1968.
 "Late Fifties at the Ferus," Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1968.
 "Three from Los Angeles: Irwin, Bell, Kauffman," Dunkelmann Gallery, Montreal, Canada, 1969.
 "Fourteen Sculptors: The Industrial Edge," Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 1969.
 "Plastic Presence," Milwaukee Art Center, 1970; The Jewish Museum, New York City, 1970; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1970.
 "Kompass 4 West Coast," Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands, 1969; Dortmund, Germany, 1969; Bern, Switzerland, 1969.
 "Transparency, Reflection, Light, Space: Four Artists," University of California at Los Angeles, 1971.
 "Contemporary American Art: Los Angeles," Fort Worth Art Museum, Texas, 1972.
 "Last Plastics Show," California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, California, 1972.
 "Corcoran Biennale," Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1973.
 "Seventy-First American Exhibition," The Art Institute of Chicago, 1974.
 "Illuminations and Reflections," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City, 1974.
 "Irvine 1965-1975," La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla, California, 1975.
 "The Last Time I Saw Ferus," Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, California, 1976.
 "75 Years of California Art: Bicentennial Exhibition," San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1976.
 "Recent Los Angeles Work," Museum of Modern Art, New York City, 1976.
 "Painting and Sculpture in California: The Modern Era," San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1976; National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., 1977.
 "Biennale de Paris: Un Anthologie 1959-1967," Paris, France, 1977.
 "Collage," Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, 1978.



A not-for profit gallery funded by Atlantic Richfield Company
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NOV 30 1978

LOS ANGELES C
MUSEUM OF

Craig Kauffman

Craig Kauffman's Interiors

Throughout history nearly all art has been produced according to certain prescribed conventions or beliefs as to the manner in which it should engage itself, such as the tribal ritual, the Golden Mean of ancient Greece, the Renaissance structuring of space according to perspective, the minimalism of the 1960's. Much rarer is art made from a direct response to the immediate environment (the cliché of an artist setting up an easel to paint the scene in front of him notwithstanding). Among the few periods in art history when artists have involved themselves with the content of perceptual experience are Impressionism and contemporary Southern California art. Craig Kauffman's new work is extremely unusual in that it combines both of these methods of approaching the art act, incorporating conventions drawn from the French and Oriental traditions together with a sensitivity to ambient light and space that is associated with a Southern California aesthetic derived from the natural environment.

Kauffman's earliest paintings, in the 1950's, were sparse Abstract Expressionist works, abstractions of semi-organic, semi-mechanical forms. This imagery was influenced in part by the work of Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia, to which Kauffman had access because of his friendship with Walter Hopps, who took him to the Arensberg collection then in Los Angeles. Executed in black, calligraphic strokes, with spare additions of color, the paintings allotted a greater percentage of space to the white of the canvas than to the artist's marks. In fact, Kauffman's discomfort with the neutrality of the canvas itself, its demand to be filled, led him to begin experimenting with plastic as a medium. In the 1960's he began making painted plastic reliefs whose empty spaces were filled with translucent, sprayed color rather than linear gestures. The reflective surfaces of these hybrid painting/sculpture objects are in a state of continuous interaction with the changing characteristics of ambient light.

Kauffman's major concerns in making the plastic reliefs were those of a painter: color, light, illusionistic space. At the beginning of the 1970's his plastic pieces became flatter physically and their formats changed from bulbous single images to irregular constructions of bars with colored masses between them. At this point it seemed more logical to make the bars actual strips of wood, instead of plastic illusions of wooden bars, and to stretch canvas in the intervening spaces. In the ensuing series both the wooden bars and the canvas were painted, the former having a relatively opaque surface and the latter a

comparatively translucent one. Certain sections of these constructed painting-objects were left empty, without canvas, playing off empty, literal space against the space of painted surfaces.

Following a sabbatical in Paris, 1976, Kauffman's current series, *Interiors*, began to evolve. Essentially they are a refinement and simplification of the pieces done in Paris, which had some structural bars on the front of the canvas, some behind it, creating complicated constructions of dimensional objects and flat planes, literal and illusionistic space. *Interior #1*, 1977, contains all of its structural bars behind the front surface, which is painted on silk rather than canvas. On the front surface strips of paper the width of the structural bars are glued on them, creating bands that are opaque, in contrast to the translucency of the rhoplex-coated silk. In addition the paper strips have a different physicality from the ambiguous surface of the silk. The paper is more familiar, a material from the everyday world, and ensures that the works will be seen as objects built in several pieces, as in the Constructivist tradition, rather than continuous, painted surfaces. This means that *Interiors* have a physical presence that anchors us perceptually to a particular object. Without the paper strips, the rhoplex-coated silk, with its elusive, translucent surface and accompanying illusionistic space, would be completely mysterious, otherworldly. It seems that Kauffman uses the paper and silk in combination to create a tension between the familiar world of commonplace objects and the other-world of abstract art, in much the same spirit that the Cubists originally invented collage, in order that art might be a part of, while simultaneously departing from, everyday life.

In the new work Kauffman's imagery, though abstract, is also more specific than it has been previously. It includes architectural fragments that function either as wall or as painting supports, both metaphorical and literal, and abstracted objects found in his immediate environment—Japanese tea bowls, palettes, light bulbs, hanging lanterns, paint brushes. The artist's use of his own milieu—studio space and tools—is a recurrent theme in French painting. Kauffman says he has always loved both the quality of paint and the reference to objects in French painting. The inclusion of abstract objects is important to him as a referent to human scale, but at the same time he has always felt that French painting is too cluttered. Hence the majority of the surface in these new works, as throughout his career, is occupied by empty space. His predilection for empty space and its sensitivity to ambient light derives not only from his California environment but also from his interest in Japanese art, such as the uninterrupted

flow of space in Japanese temples. "In a perverse way," he says, "I like to make paintings in which you can't make a mistake, can't paint over, but instead have to build rather than correct, like Oriental art."

Kauffman's imagery is articulated in a restrained manner that is obviously carefully considered with regard to placement and scale, but does not preclude spontaneous gesture. The fluid washes of color and calligraphic black lines that outline the paper frames of implied walls, windows, doors, are freely applied. Colors exist like pigmented shadows around the architectural fragments and studio objects, and establish a variety of moods in different paintings: restrained in monochromatic purple-grey; earthy in a palette of brown, green, red; gaudy in orange, magenta, yellow, green combinations. The illusion of colored shadows in these paintings recalls the artist's involvement with actual colored shadows cast on the wall through transparent plexiglass in earlier work. Many of the painted shadows are irrational, seemingly cast by objects that are not to be found within the painting as in several of Duchamp's works.

Although the *Interiors* have many affinities with painting tradition, they also depart from it in many ways. In order to avoid a framed look, Kauffman overlaps the strips of paper, especially at the corners. Although he refers to objects, his references are ambiguous. As he says, "I don't want to be too literal, like making a tea house wall." For paintings these have very little paint on the surface. Games are played by the artist with placement and scale, resulting in some works that seem to be square but in fact are not.

For Kauffman the ambiguous quality of space is the most important aspect of the new work. It is an ambiguity that results from the use of material—silk-screen silk stretched tightly over the stretcher bars like fabric over an airplane wing; the silk both sprayed from behind and painted with silvery, shimmering rhoplex on the front. The resulting surface looks translucent, indeterminate from a distance, but cannot be seen through when viewed closely. The elusive, pearlescent reflections of light are subtle, visible only through concentrated perceptual attention. This lack of spatial definition, of location, and resultant mystery is not an issue traditionally addressed by painting. It is closer in fact to the qualities found in environmental works by California artists like Robert Irwin or Larry Bell, with whom Kauffman feels more rapport than he does with painters. In fact Kauffman himself has experimented with environmental installations, as in a 1970-71 exhibition at UCLA, *Transparency, Reflection, Light, Space: Four Artists*, but learned that he was temperamentally more comfortable working in his

studio with architectural things he could control than with the environment. Nonetheless, the new works are able to produce a phenomenological experience of empty, ambient light and space. That they can do this in conjunction with tasteful, abstract references to specific objects and art traditions is a rare accomplishment and results in an original and highly resolved body of work.

Melinda Wortz, Director, Fine Arts Gallery, University of California at Irvine

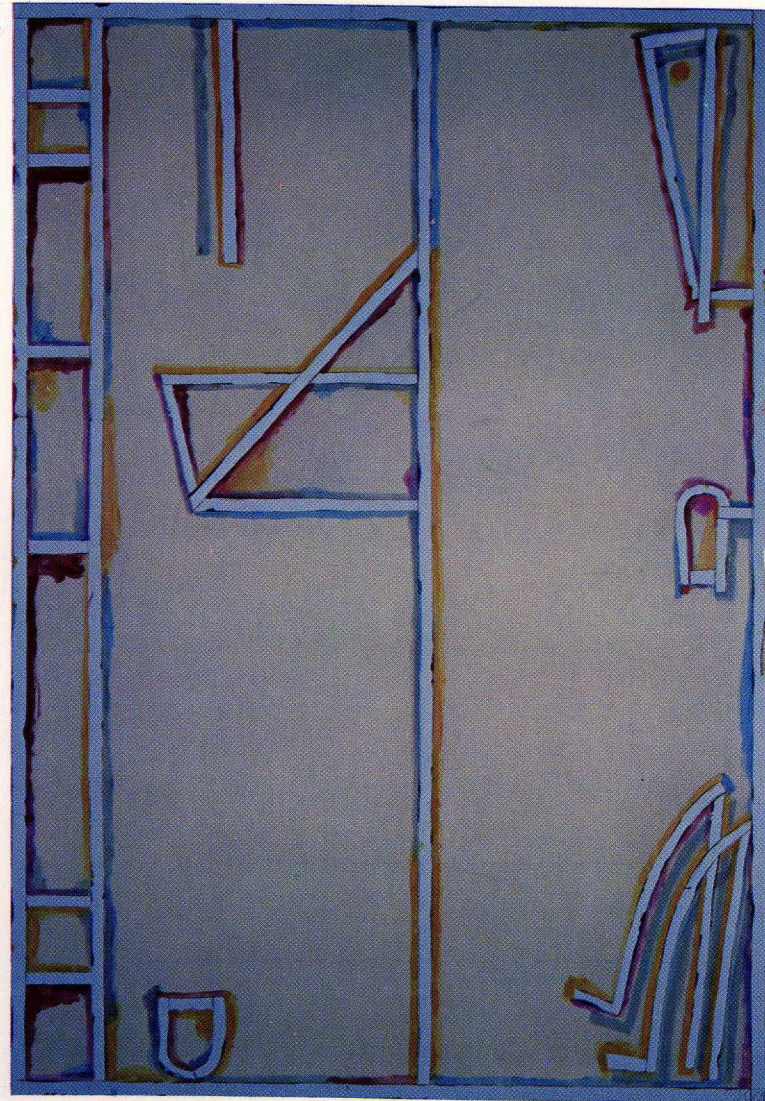
Cover

Coin de l'Atelier, 1977, Acrylic on Paper and Silk, 64" x 39 3/4"

Marion Sampler

Collages
May 1—June 10, 1978

A not-for-profit gallery funded by Atlantic Richfield Company





Cover *Interior Shelf*, 1977, Acrylic on Paper and Silk, 82¼" x 56"

ONE-MAN

Craig Kauffman
April 18–May 27, 1978

You are cordially invited to
a preview opening Monday night
April 17th from 8 to 10 pm.

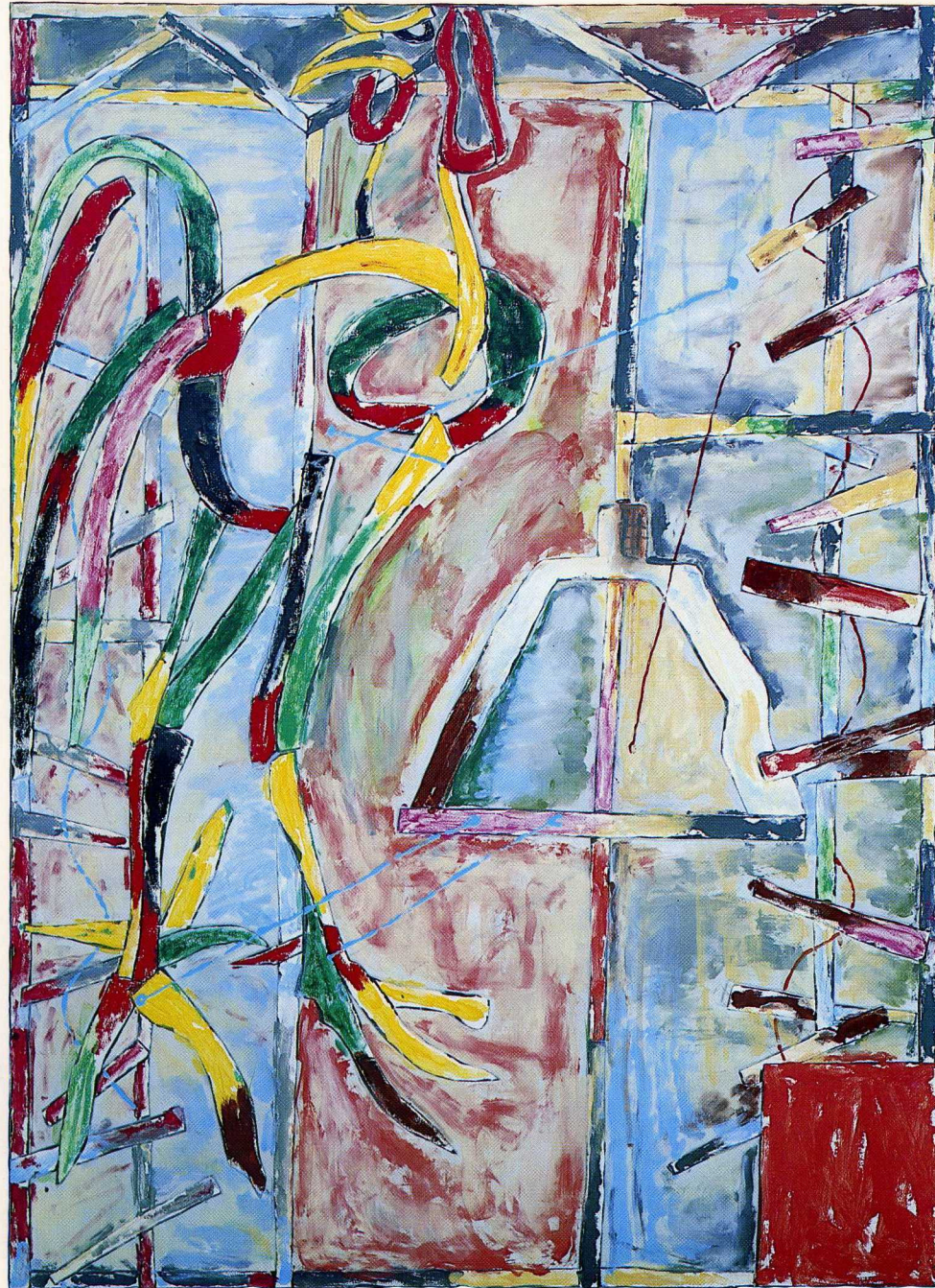
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MUSEUM OF ART

Atlantic Richfield Plaza, Beneath the Twin Towers
Fifth and Flower Streets, Los Angeles 90071

Craig Kauffman

Opening:
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6-8 p.m.

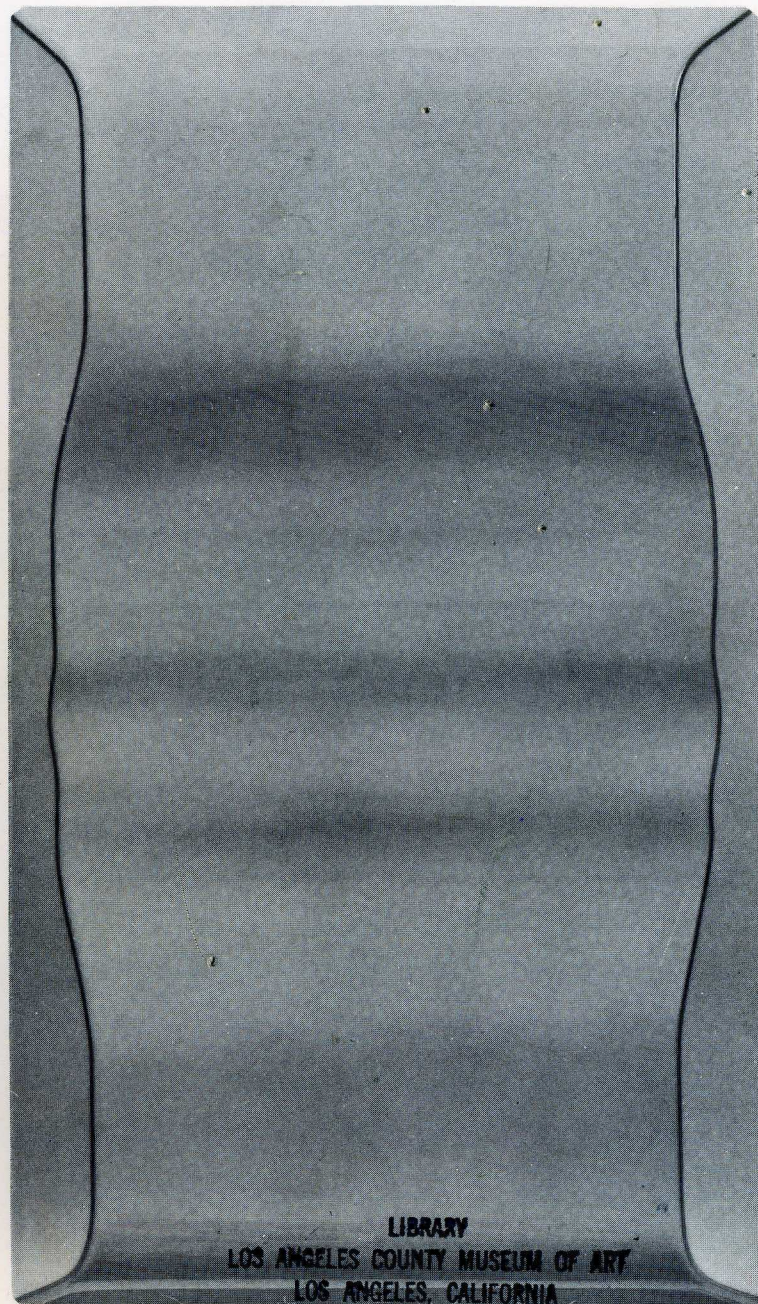
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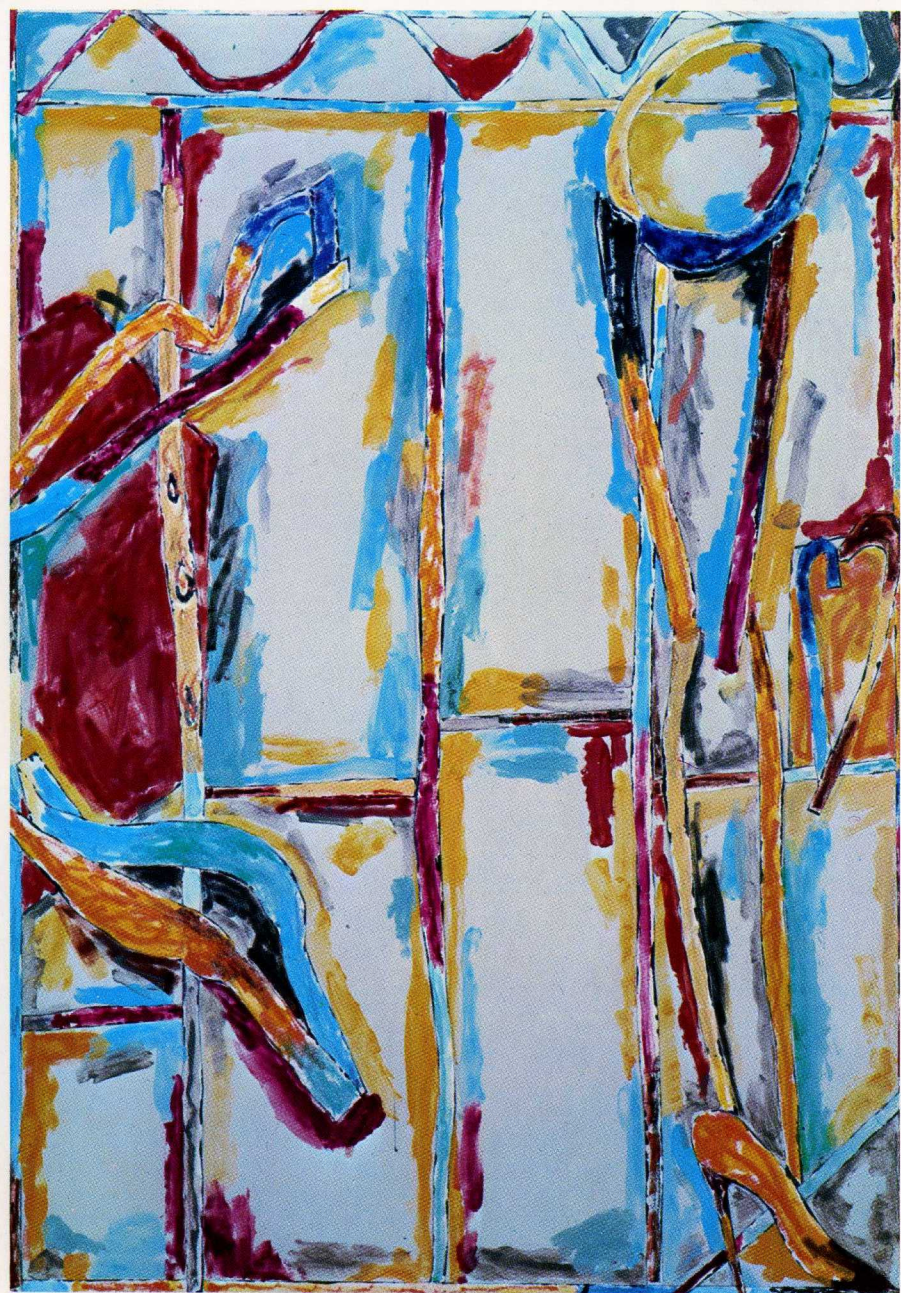


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LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

MAR 17 1967

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND
AN EXHIBITION OF NEW WORK
BY CRAIG KAUFFMAN
OPENING ON
TUESDAY, ~~JANUARY 10th~~, 1967
AT THE
FERUS/PACE GALLERY
812 NORTH LA CIENEGA BLVD.
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Tell Tale Heart, 3rd Version, 1980



The Trustees and Director of the
La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art
cordially invite you
to the Members' Preview of

CRAIG KAUFFMAN:
A Comprehensive Exhibition 1957 - 1980

Friday, March 13, 1981
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Initiated and sponsored by the
Fellows of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles,
and supported by a grant from the National
Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C.,
a Federal Agency

Admission to the preview is by invitation
only. This invitation with a membership card
admits two upon presentation at the door.

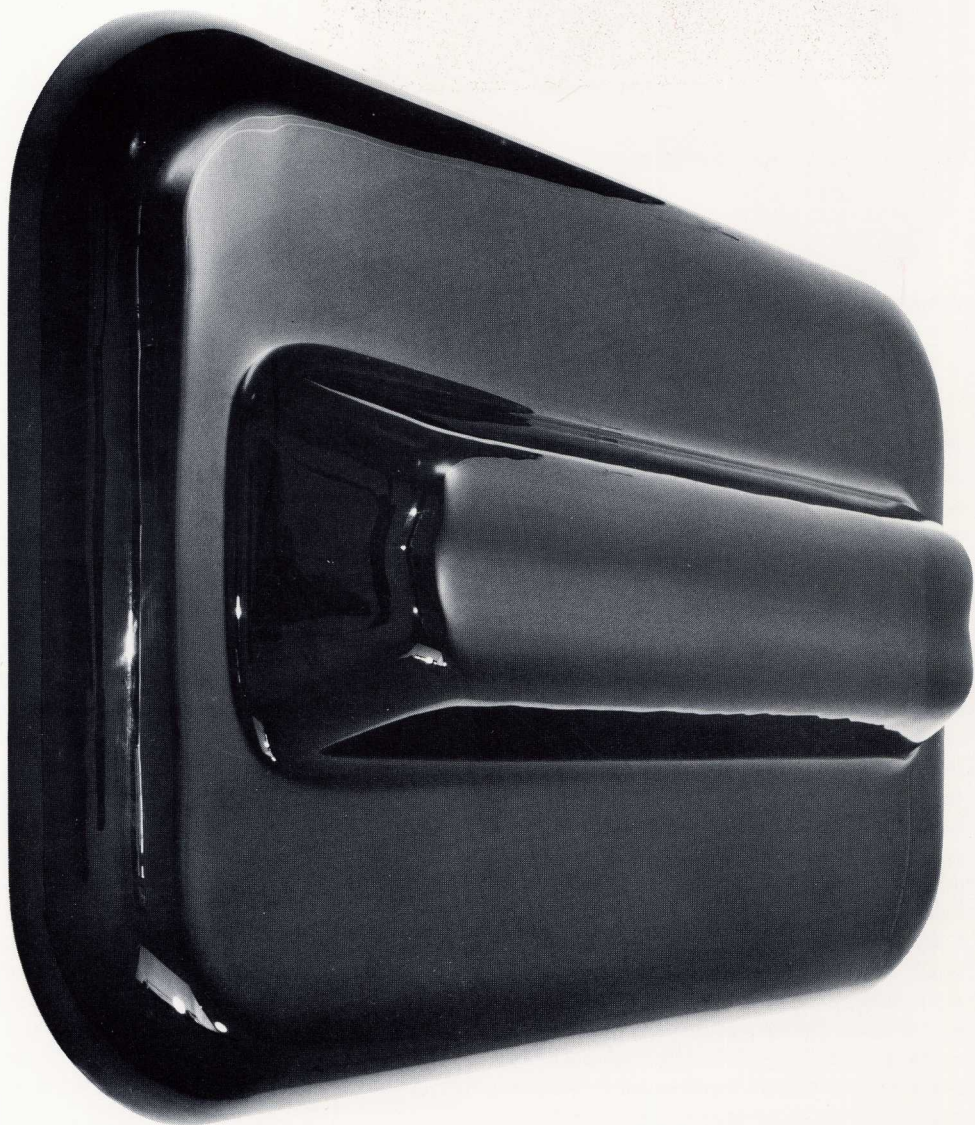
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SEP 11 1981

**LOS ANGELES
MUSEUM OF ART**

C R A I G K A U F F M A N

Wall Reliefs from the Late 1960s



September 4–November 8, 1987

Whitney Museum of American Art

Wall Reliefs from the Late 1960s

September 4–November 8, 1987

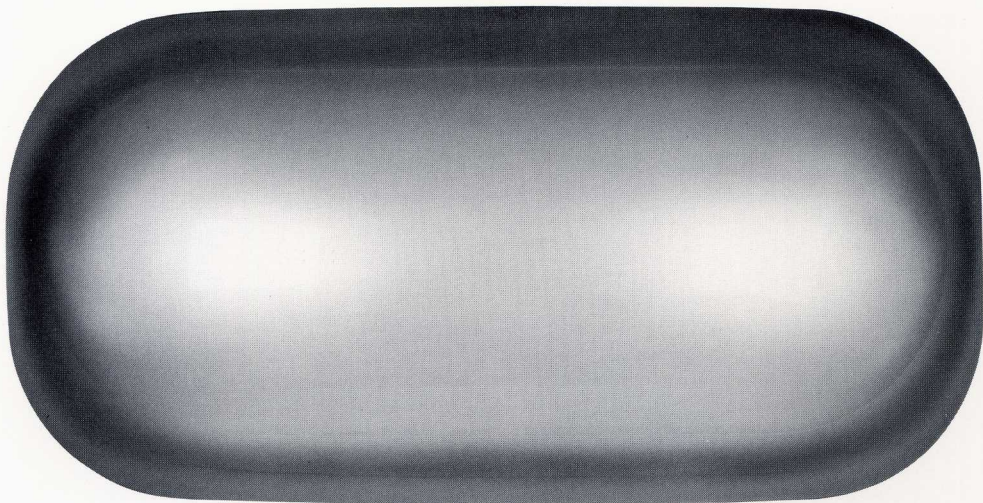
Whitney Museum of American Art

The experimentation with plastic media and eccentric forms that characterized sculpture made in the late 1960s and early 1970s by such New York artists as Eva Hesse, Barry Le Va, Richard Tuttle, and Alan Saret was matched in Los Angeles in the work of Robert Irwin, Billy Al Bengston, Ken Price, and Craig Kauffman, who were developing an aesthetic that would come to be seen as southern California's first wholly unique art. While they shared with their Eastern colleagues a preference for new materials—especially acrylic resins—the Californians worked, each in his own way, toward more deliberately composed ends. The younger New Yorkers espoused a variety of three-dimensional gestural modes that tacitly refuted geometric, serial, or impersonally rendered sculpture. By contrast, the California artists were engaged in a profound search for forms that could accommodate serialization, an industrial look, and geometric symmetry. The artistic climate in Los Angeles was then marked by its dependence on the etiolated second-generation Abstract Expressionism that had developed in San Francisco and on the charismatic, but retrograde, example of Rico Lebrun's figurative expressionism. In reaction to these muddled histrionics, Kauffman and his compatriots evolved cleaner styles, mostly nonrepresentational, which seemed to reflect the mass media's image of southern California as a materialistic utopia, an image that was, to some extent, true to life. By the late 1960s, their approach had been dubbed the "L.A. finish fetish," and the

work of many of them, especially Kauffman, had reached an apogee of severe but allusive abstraction.

Although Kauffman had painted with some regularity since the age of seven, he chose to study architecture when he entered the University of Southern California in 1950. A well-received one-man show of his drawings and paintings—by his own admission, Paul Klee-derived—at the prestigious Felix Landau Gallery helped him make the decision to abandon architecture for studio art, and he transferred to the University of California, Los Angeles, in 1952. The UCLA faculty had little impact on Kauffman, but an important Henri Matisse retrospective organized by Frederick Wight for the UCLA gallery did. That show, plus an Abstract Expressionist show at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, helped him perfect his own calligraphic style, one that amalgamated quasi-mechanical forms with biomorphic ones. Kauffman's intense palette in this period recalls Matisse's, but at the same time responds to the enveloping white glare of Los Angeles light.

By 1957, when Walter Hopps (a boyhood friend of Kauffman) and the artist Ed Kienholz organized the Ferus Gallery, Kauffman's work had achieved a level of quality and compositional clarity that was clearly in advance of his contemporaries. His paintings were included in the Ferus opening show, and he was given a one-artist show there in 1958 that attracted much favorable attention.



Kauffman spent the next few years away from Los Angeles—first in San Francisco, then in Europe, mostly in Paris. On his return to the States in 1961, he saw a show of recent work by Bengston and Price at the Martha Jackson Gallery in New York and felt an immediate empathy for the pristine, non-gestural, spray-painted technique each employed. Back in Los Angeles, he painted on glass in an attempt to get a clean line in his own work; he then turned to a new support—plexiglass. Abstracted out of his previous calligraphic imagery, the forms in these paintings—bulbous shapes with lanky, hockey stick pendants drooping from them—assume a stark, sexually suggestive character. Kauffman's color had also evolved into a patently artificial spectrum which contrasts with the vaguely anthropomorphic quality of his drawing. In an attempt to further dematerialize color and ambient light, he began painting on the back surface of the plexiglass sheets, making for a shadow-box effect. At first he brushed on the paint, but soon, with Bengston's encouragement, turned to spraying uniform, unmodulated colors.

Early in 1964 Kauffman began customizing the plexiglass armature by molding its surface to his specifications. A series of undulating reliefs resulted, his so-called "washboard paintings"—hollow, molded shapes that merge figure and ground. Using opaque, pastel-colored plexiglass, Kauffman painted thin accent lines where the sides joined the cascading front plane to empha-

size its topological character. In color and by means of its highly nuanced drawing, this work corresponds to certain contemporaneous Color Field paintings—especially those of Jules Olitski—but the glossy, commercial plexiglass medium suggests a kinship with the advertising-based strategies of Pop Art.

For some time, Kauffman had been attracted to a pair of large plastic fruit clusters on the wall of a doughnut shop he frequented in west Los Angeles. Brighter, more eccentric in shape, and more technologically advanced than anything he had done, these commercial signs led him to visit a number of the small plastics factories that served the area's automobile and aerospace industries. Vacuum-formed molding thus came to his attention and he began using this method to fashion curved, lozenge-shaped reliefs. A series of twenty objects in two scales, employing blue, red, green, and orange plexiglass, resulted. *Untitled* (1967–68; Fig. 1) is an example of the smaller version. The piece projects from the wall plane in two swells, a shallow one that provides a resting frame and, at the center, a rectangular, horizontal protuberance indented across its middle. Glossy and symmetrical, the work's visually wet surface engenders anatomical, sometimes overtly sexual, comparisons. Another work in the series (*Untitled*, 1967–68) shows a complication of subject as Kauffman began working with neutrally colored, translucent plexiglass, spraying several colors from

Fig 2. *Untitled*, 1968–69

behind. Here a hazy, tricolored spectrum activates a centrally located ridge inside the larger shape.

Increasingly concerned with the interior light of his work, Kauffman moved away from these relatively opaque pieces in his next series of works, the “bubbles” (Fig. 3). Still using translucent plexiglass, he adopted nacreous color and enlarged the interior convexity to the outer edges. The bubbles were sucked into a reinforced box to create a seamless, inverted bathtub shape. Kauffman would build the wooden frames, then help fabricate the work at Planet Plastics in suburban Paramount, California. He again worked in two scales, one roughly $2 \times 4 \frac{1}{2}$ feet, the other $4 \times 7 \frac{1}{2}$ feet.

The five “bubble” pieces from 1968–69 in this exhibition were made with the vacuum-formed molding process. They show an evolution of form, scale, and color that testifies to Kauffman's growing confidence in the medium and its effects. The previously centralized spatial subject now constitutes the entire shape, obviating any distinction between figure and ground. We are confronted with a single, uninterrupted, horizonless shape. Kauffman sprays Morano paint on the back of these forms, a medium that allows pigment to vary in an extremely delicate stipple, admitting and reflecting light in a chalky, ethereal sheen. As the color shifts in value from different viewing angles, the pieces seem to pulsate. Kauffman simultaneously defines the area of the actual art object and engages the void behind it. Perfect

and perfectly ambiguous—in their tertiary colors, fabrication, and meaning—they seem otherworldly, removed from our accustomed experience. Kauffman's wish to get a “halo of color without associating it so much with the form” aligns this work to Robert Irwin's carefully lit plastic wall disks of the same period. Both artists made early and noteworthy achievements in the introduction of ambient, perceptual phenomena into the art experience.

Throughout this plexiglass work, Kauffman considered himself a painter, a self-image that underscores the odd derivation of these pieces from French Impressionism. Like the earlier French painters, he sought a vibrant art object that could not only be looked at, but also looked into. He recognized that in dislocating sight from its utilitarian function, the viewer could celebrate the uniquely nonverbal intelligence of vision.

Richard Armstrong
Adjunct Curator

I wish to thank the generous lenders to the exhibition, and also Julie Grossman, the Asher/Faure Gallery, and Craig Kauffman for their assistance.
R.A.

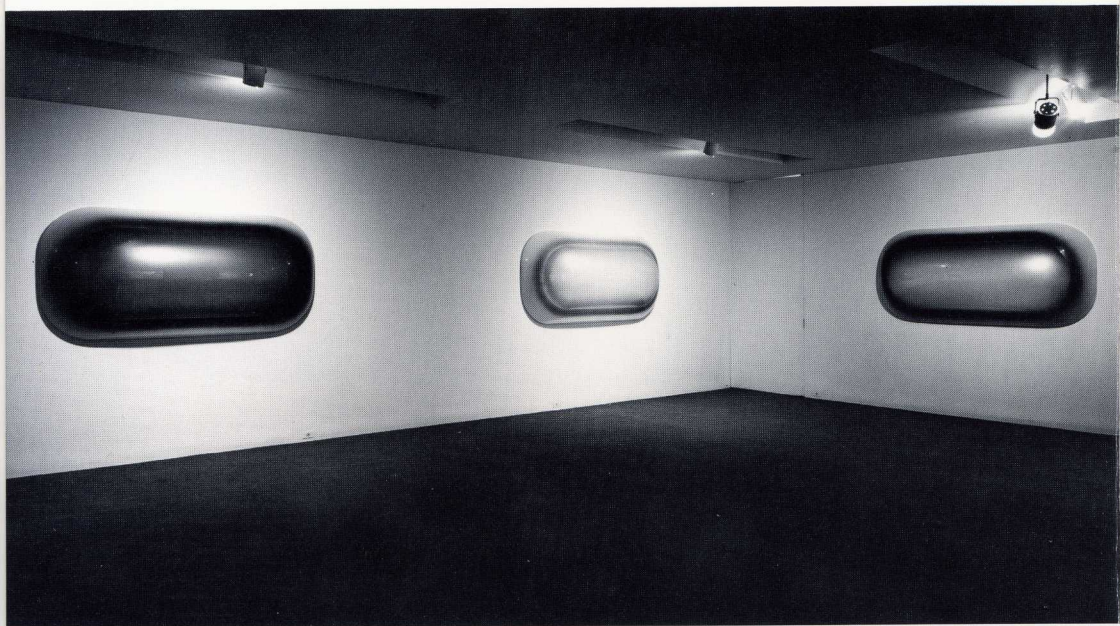


Fig 3. Installation view, "Craig Kauffman," Pace Gallery, New York, 1970

Works in the Exhibition

Dimensions are in inches; height precedes width precedes depth.

Untitled, 1967–68

Acrylic lacquer on vacuum-formed plexiglass,
34 × 54 × 8

Asher/Faure Gallery, Los Angeles

Untitled, 1967–68

Acrylic lacquer on vacuum-formed plexiglass,
18 × 54 × 10

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Kibrick

Untitled, 1968

Acrylic lacquer on vacuum-formed plexiglass,
22 1/2 × 52 × 12

Asher/Faure Gallery, Los Angeles

Untitled, 1968

Acrylic lacquer on vacuum-formed plexiglass,
22 × 50 × 12

La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, California; Gift of Arthur and Carol Goldberg in honor of Margo Leavin

Untitled, 1968–69

Acrylic lacquer on vacuum-formed plexiglass,
34 × 56 × 9

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles;
Gift of Irving Blum

Untitled, 1968–69

Acrylic lacquer on vacuum-formed plexiglass,
43 × 89 × 15

Collection of Vivian and Robert Rowan

Untitled, 1968–69

Acrylic lacquer on vacuum-formed plexiglass,
43 × 89 × 23

Asher/Faure Gallery, Los Angeles

Cover: Fig 1. *Untitled*, 1967–68

Craig Kauffman was born in 1932 in Los Angeles, where he now lives and works. He was educated at the University of California, Los Angeles (B.A., 1955; M.A., 1956).

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions

1952 Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles

1958 Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles

1962 Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles

1965 Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles

1967 Pace Gallery, New York
Ferus/Pace Gallery, Los Angeles

1969 Pace Gallery, New York
Irving Blum Gallery, Los Angeles

1970 Pasadena Art Museum
Pace Gallery, New York

Selected Bibliography

Livingston, Jane. "Recent Work, by Craig Kauffman . . . a New Non-pictorial Set of Terms," *Artforum*, 6 (February 1968), pp. 36–39.

Bengston, Billy Al. "Late Fifties at the Ferus: A Participant Refuses to Take the Show Lying Down," *Artforum*, 7 (January 1969), pp. 33–35.

Pincus-Witten, Robert. "New York," *Artforum*, 7 (April 1969), p. 70.

Schjeldahl, Peter. "New York Letter," *Art International*, 13 (April 20, 1969), p. 65.

Plagens, Peter, "Los Angeles," *Artforum*, 7 (April 1970), p. 84.

La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, California. *Craig Kauffman: Comprehensive Survey 1957–80*, 1981 (catalogue).

DNE-MAN

CRAIG KAUFFMAN

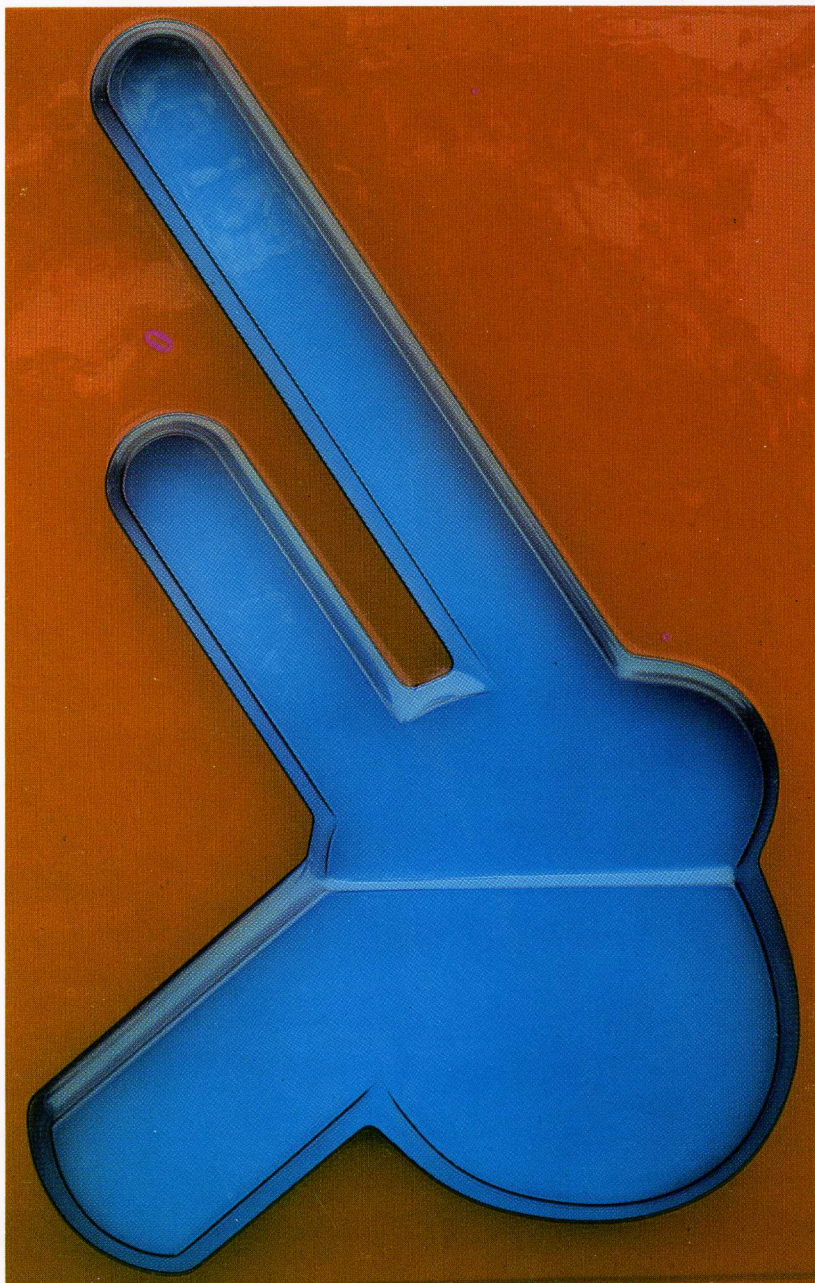
THE PACE GALLERY 32E57 NEW YORK

MARCH 21-8 APRIL 1970

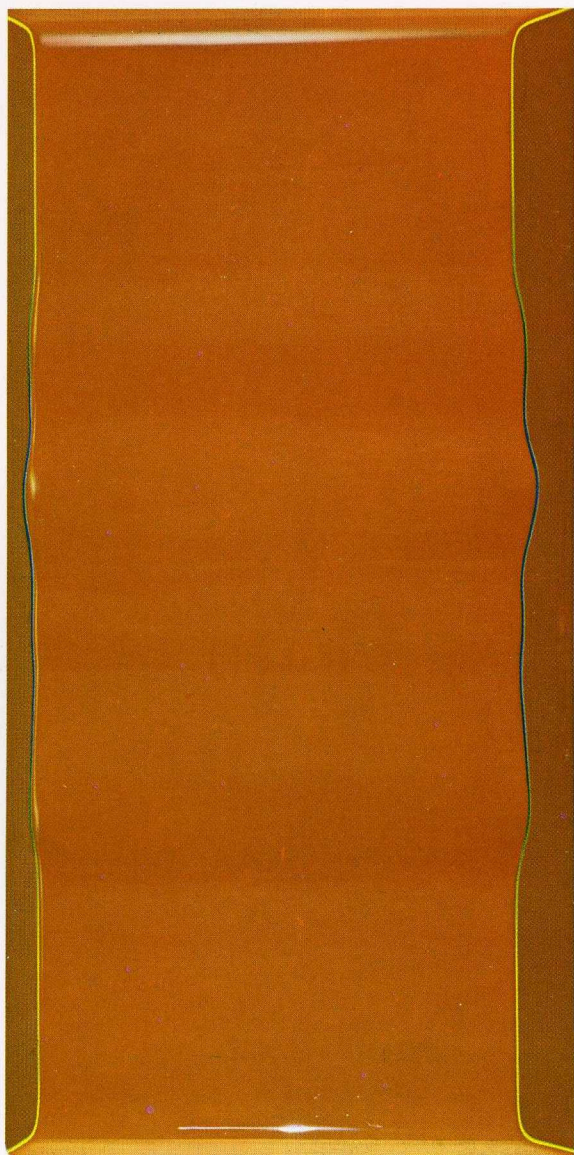
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LOS ANGELES COUNTY
MUSEUM OF ART



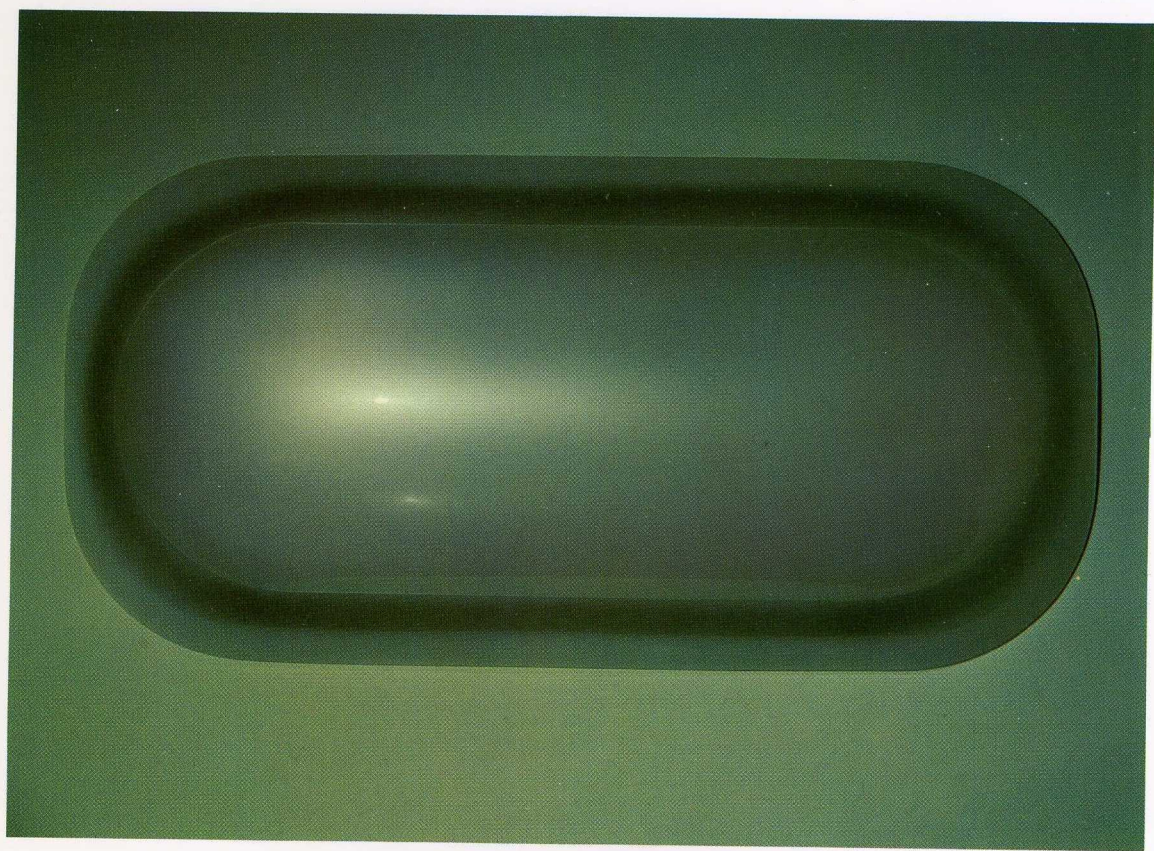
1965 48 x 36



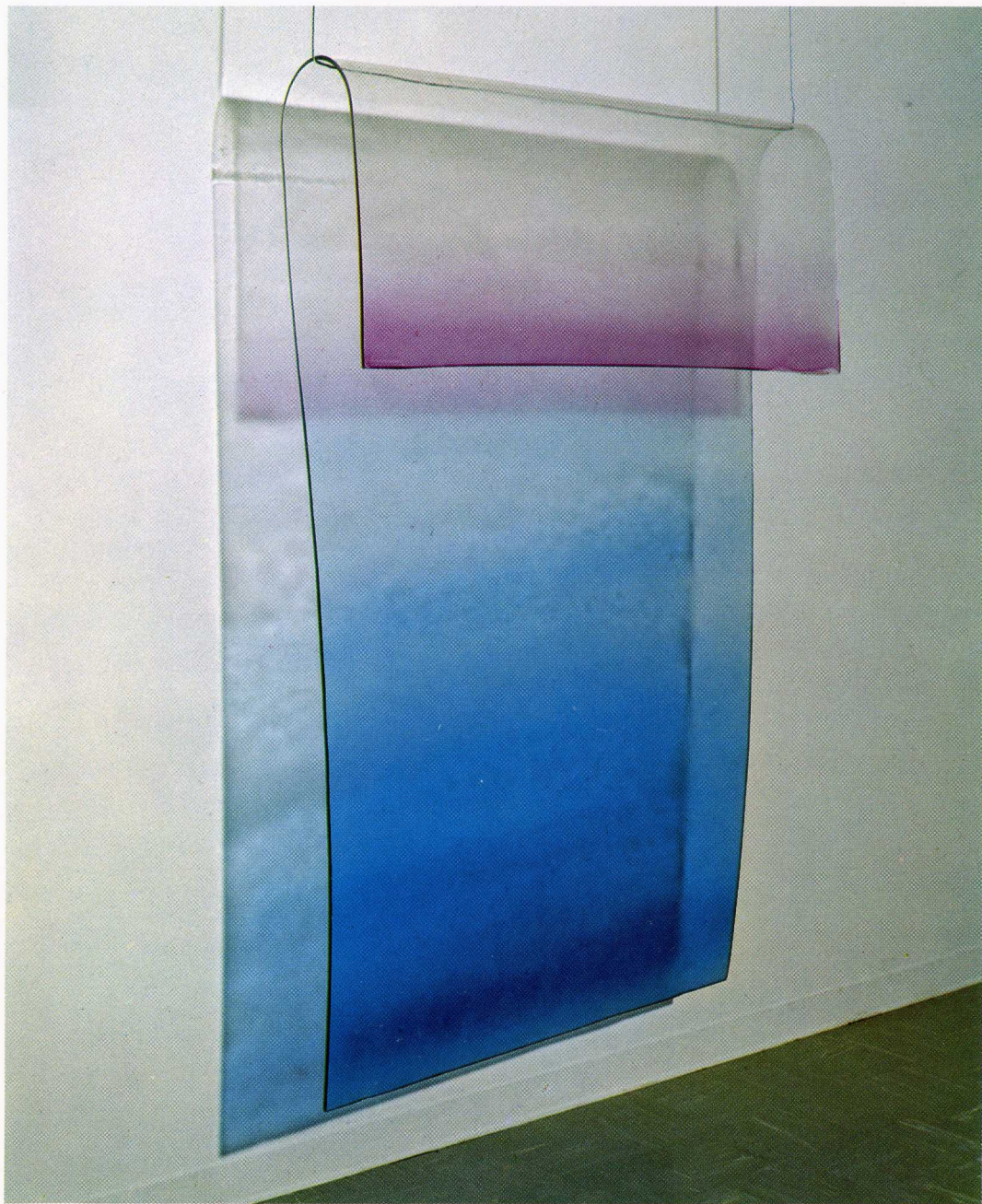
1966 77 x 38½



1967 50 x 72 x 15



1968 44 x 89 x 17



1969 73 x 50 x 9



1969 73 x 50 x 9

CRAIG KAUFFMAN

This exhibition consists of Kauffman's 1969-1970 works. The other illustrations show his development from the first "figure-ground" vacuum-formed works to his current "loose-form" hanging pieces. All works are sprayed acrylic lacquer on vacuum-formed cast acrylic.

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles, 1953
Dilexi Gallery, San Francisco, 1958, 1960
Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles, 1958, 1962, 1963, 1965
Ferus/Pace Gallery, Los Angeles, 1967
Pace Gallery, New York, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1969
Pasadena Art Museum, Retrospective, Pasadena, 1970

ONE-MAN EXHIBITIONS

San Francisco Museum Annual San Francisco Museum of Art, 1952, 1954, 1959, 1960, 1961
Member's Gallery Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1953
California Painters and Sculptors, 35 and Under University of California, L.A., 1959
50 Paintings by 37 Painters University of California, L.A., 1960
University of Illinois Annual Urbana, 1961
5 At Pace Pace Gallery, New York, 1965
Los Angeles Now Robert Fraser Gallery, London, 1966
Image, Color, Form Detroit Institute of Arts, 1967
Ten From Los Angeles Seattle Art Museum, 1966
The 1960's Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1967
Recent Acquisitions Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1967
A New Aesthetic The Washington Gallery of Modern Art, 1967
V Paris Biennale Organized by the Pasadena Art Museum for Paris and Pasadena, 1967
Plastic Paintings and Sculpture California State College, Los Angeles, 1968
L.A.-N.Y. University of California, San Diego, 1968
Painting: Out From The Wall Des Moines Art Center, 1968
Contemporary American Painting and Sculpture Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, 1967
Los Angeles 6 Vancouver Art Gallery, 1968
Faculty 1968 University of California at Irvine, 1968
14 Sculptors: The Industrial Edge Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 1969
Highlights of the 1968-69 Season Larry Aldrich Museum, Ridgefield, Conn., 1969
Kompas IV Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Holland, 1969
A Plastic Presence Milwaukee Art Center, 1969
69th American Exhibition Art Institute of Chicago, 1970

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Museum of Modern Art, New York
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo
Larry Aldrich Museum, Ridgefield, Connecticut
Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis

king kong jello x-ray jello used jello
ersonic jello get it on jello dispos
ello modern jello free jello stoned jello or
gan jello mouse jello am-fm jello formal
jello not now jello live jello monday jello
f.d.r. jello craig kauffman jello bubble gu
m jello go down jello jazz jello spoon jello
lo pasadena art museum jello five-star jello
ello come jello pingpong jello muffin jello
o loud jello tiny rub jello 27 january - 1 m
arch 1970 jello cuddle jello fish jello dirt
ello steel wool jello bug jello upstairs jello
ello drop dead jello mean jello dance jello
o 8x8 jello holy cats jello picture me jello
o cough jello ddt jello lonesome jello for
mica jello blatant jello western jello hop
ping jello undone jello button-down jello
eather jello homeless jello starlet jello f
eather jello oh you kid jello craig kauffm
an jello one up jello empty jello sitting jello
lo tv jello vietnam jello asphalt jello april
ello ghetto jello until jello oh jello univers
ty of california, irvine jello burn baby bu
rn jello ac/dc jello dig jello innocent jello
touch me jello 10 march - 5 april 1970 jello
ello love me jello lace jello giggling jello
up jello endless jello sleeping jello brea
the jello finger jello teeth jello fertile jello

KAUFFMAN
ONE-MAN

LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
MAR 13 1970

what is a wall? it is always something for bumping one's head against. the real wall, of whatever material, be it brick, studs sixteen inches on center, cement, adobe, flat or curved, is something to be reckoned with. it is also an idea which separates us from each other. walls divide worlds. whether of bamboo or iron, walls are our creations. even the invisible walls that surround each of us denote our space, our identity. "c'est une chose mystérieuse la mur." thing of mind or reality? crazy jane said, "what a terrible thing for a young girl to be a wall." it is terrible to be any inanimate object but to become a wall is perhaps the worst. to walk into a wall and never come out is very possible. it is as if the wall calls to us to come in and stay in its cold interior. destroy the wall with color á la léger? cover the wall with paintings? make protrusions from it, poke holes in it? perhaps we should play with walls, with illusions, shadows, in order to render them passable to our substance. to walk through a wall is not just for houdini. perhaps we can all enter and come out safely.

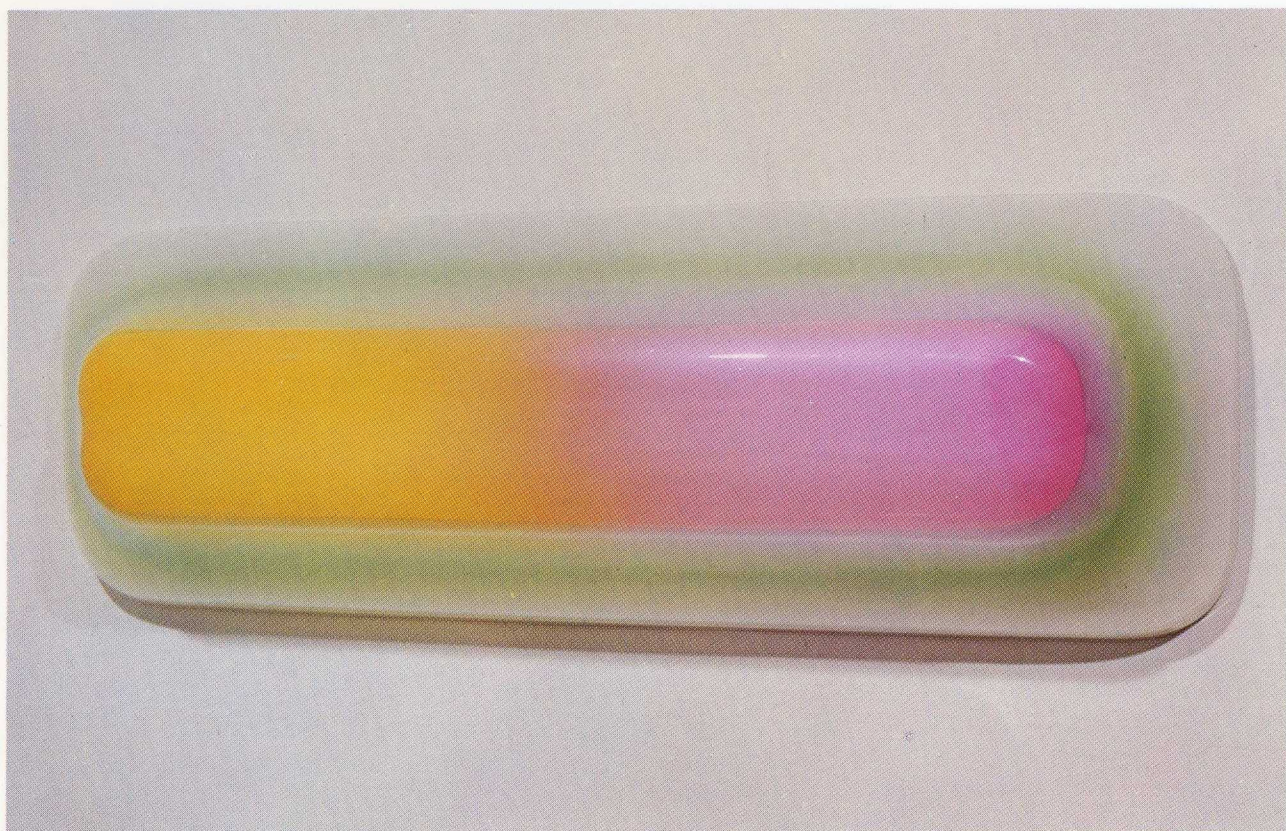
craig kauffman



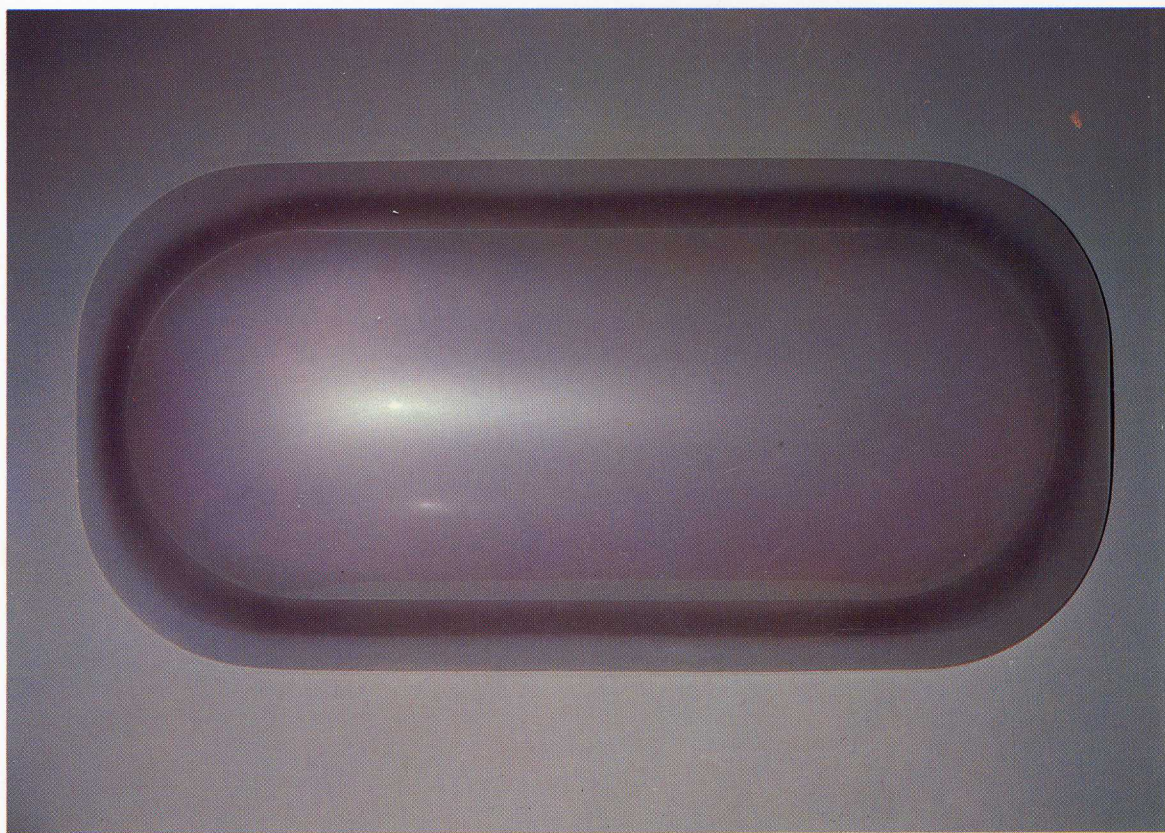
4 Untitled 1965 48 x 36



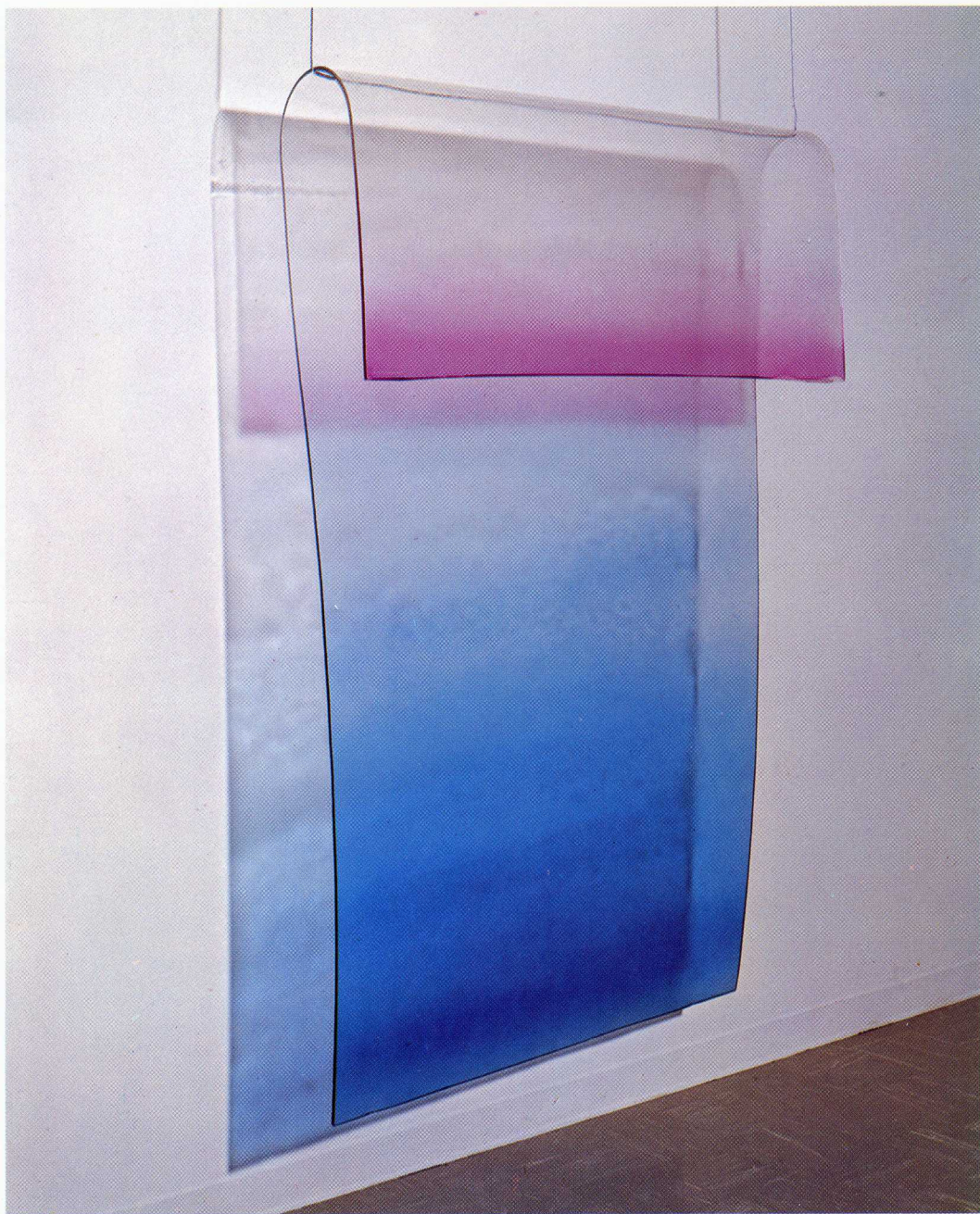
I.I. Untitled 1967 50 x 72 x 15



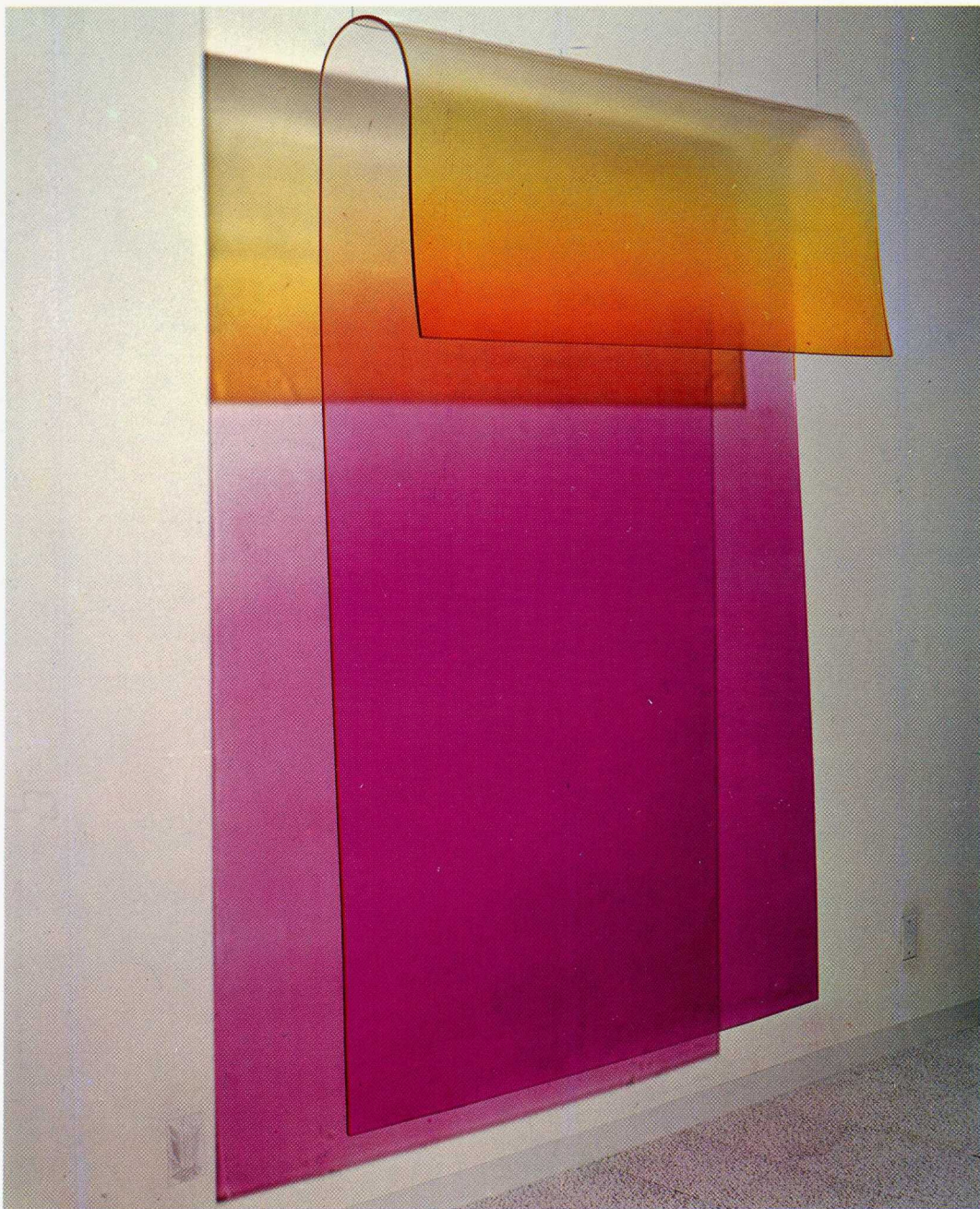
14 Untitled 1968 19 x 55½ x 10



15 Untitled 1968 44 x 89 x 17



19 Untitled 1969 73 x 50 x 9



20 Untitled 1969 73 x 50 x 9

Catalog of the Exhibition

Craig Kauffman

Born 1932 in Los Angeles. Lives in Laguna Beach, California.

Dimensions are in inches; height precedes width precedes depth.
All pieces are sprayed acrylic lacquer on vacuum-formed plexiglas.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Untitled 1964
90 x 46½ x 8
Irving Blum Gallery, Los Angeles | 7 Untitled 1965
66 x 36
Private Collection, Los Angeles |
| 2 Yellow-Orange 1965
90 x 46½ x 8
Los Angeles County Museum of Art | * 8 Untitled 1965
66 x 36
Laura Lee Stearns, Los Angeles |
| 3 Untitled 1965
48 x 36
Anonymous loan | 9 Untitled 1965
55½ x 31
Private Collection, Los Angeles |
| * 4 Untitled 1965
48 x 36
Larry Urrutia, La Jolla | * 10 Untitled 1965
55½ x 31
Mr. & Mrs. Albert Levinson, Los Angeles |
| 5 Untitled 1965
76½ x 38½
Vivian C. Kauffman, Los Angeles | 11 Untitled 1967
50 x 72 x 15
The Kleiner Foundation, Beverly Hills
Courtesy of the Los Angeles County
Museum of Art |
| 6 Untitled 1965
76½ x 38½
Vivian C. Kauffman, Los Angeles | 12 Untitled 1967
54 x 34 x 8
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas G. Terbell, Jr., Pasadena |

"Jello Poem" conceived by Craig Kauffman, 1964:

Any word, phrase, initial before the word "jello." May be expanded in all directions, including the fourth. It may also exist in one's mind or be composed and spoken at random during idle moments or while driving the freeways.

Exhibition Dates

Pasadena Art Museum
27 January – 1 March, 1970

University of California, Irvine
10 March – 5 April, 1970

- 13 Untitled 1967
54 x 34 x 8
Irving Blum Gallery, Los Angeles
- 14 Untitled 1968
19 x 55½ x 10
Pasadena Art Museum
- 15 Untitled 1968
44 x 89 x 17
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas G. Terbell, Jr., Pasadena
- 16 Untitled 1969
44 x 89 x 17
Irving Blum Gallery, Los Angeles
- 17 Untitled 1969
23½ x 52¼ x 12
Irving Blum Gallery, Los Angeles
- 18 Untitled 1969
23½ x 52¼ x 12
Irving Blum Gallery, Los Angeles

- 19 Untitled 1969
73 x 50 x 9
Pace Gallery, New York
- 20 Untitled 1969
73 x 50 x 9
Pace Gallery, New York
- 21 Untitled 1969
73 x 50 x 9
Pace Gallery, New York
- 22 Untitled 1969
73 x 50 x 9
Pace Gallery, New York
- 23 Untitled 1969
108 x 84 x 9
Pace Gallery, New York

**Asterisk indicates that piece is not included
in the exhibition at the University of
California, Irvine.*

CRAIG KAUFFMAN



IRVING BLUM GALLERY

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

FROM TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 1969

CRAIG KAUFFMAN



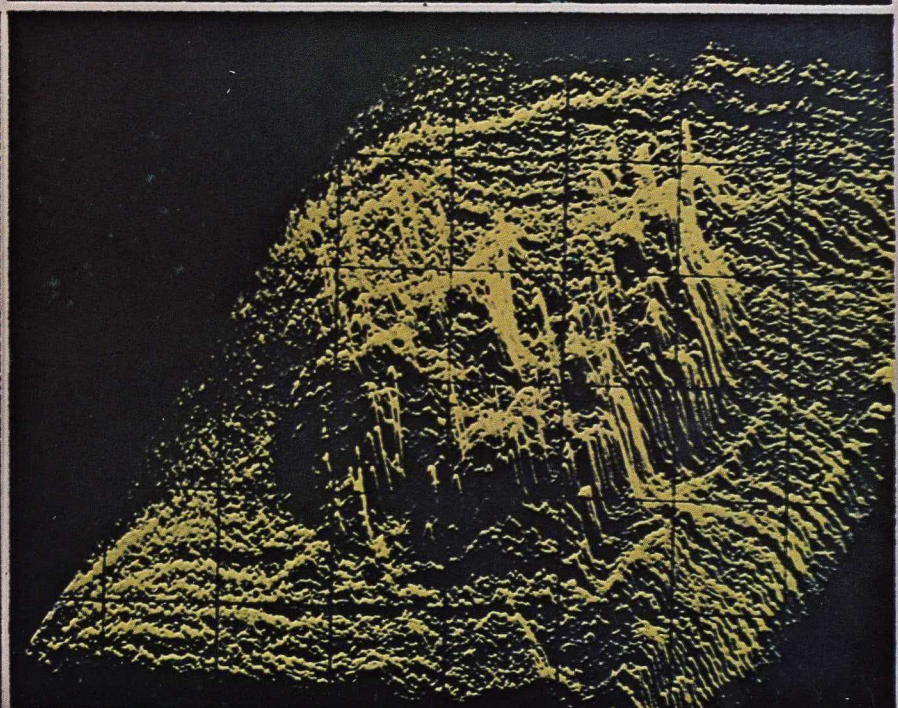
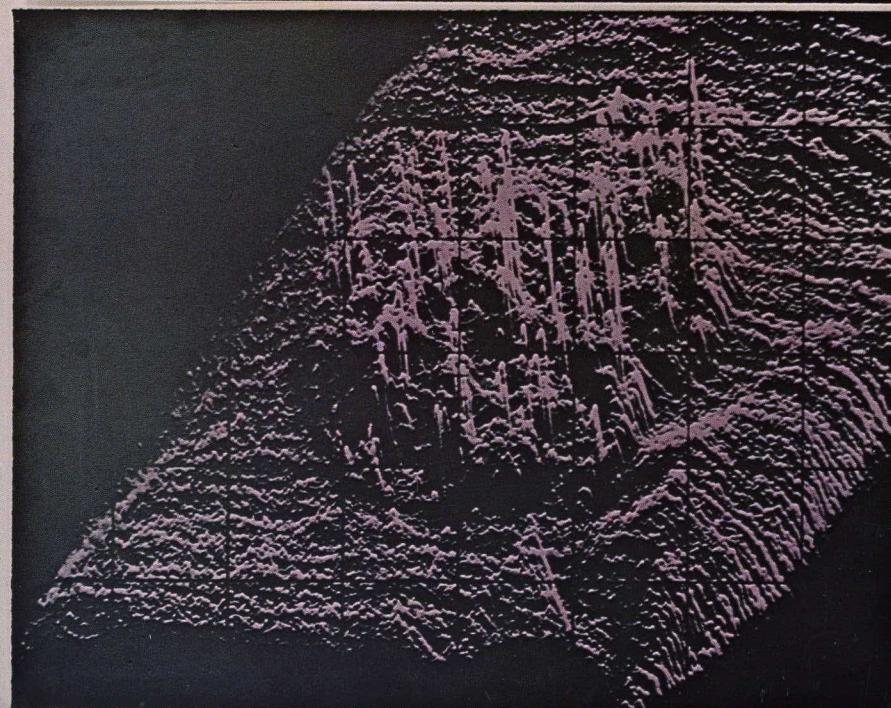
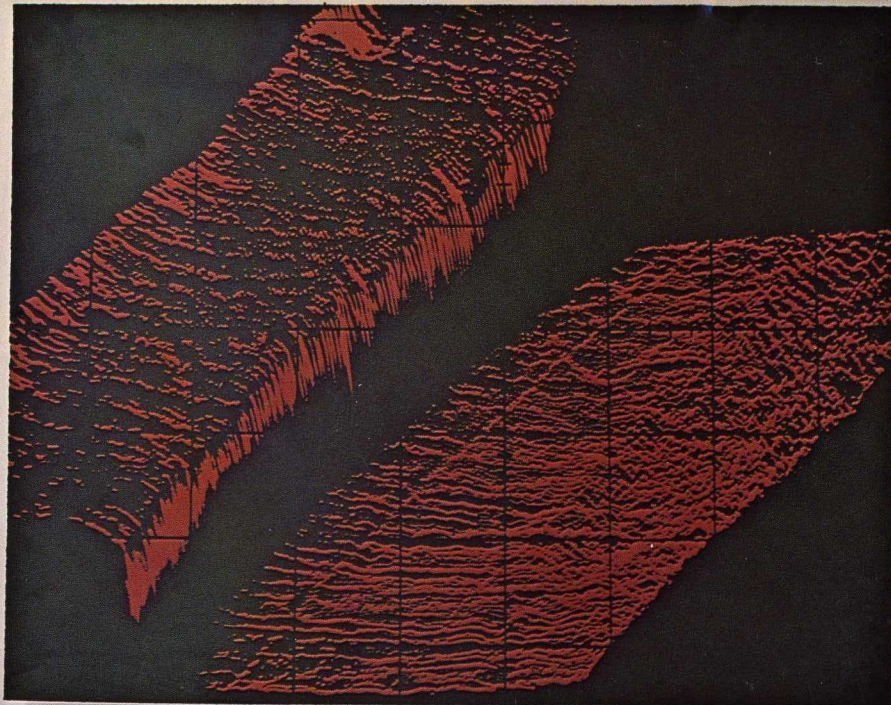
LIBRARY
LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
MAY 11 1973

IRVING BLUM GALLERY

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

FROM TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1972

KAUFFMAN, CRAIG



LIBRARY
LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

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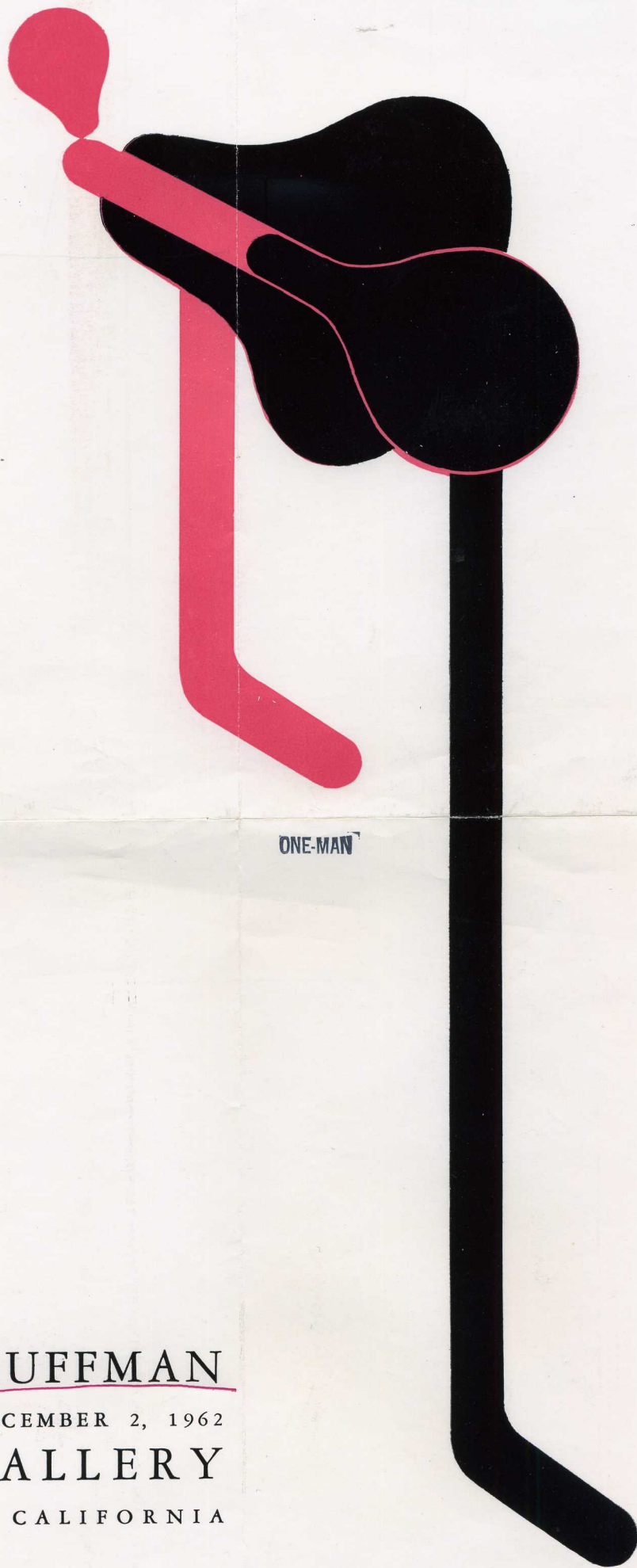
photo: dennis bopper

CRAIG KAUFFMAN

FROM TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 1965

FERUS GALLERY

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA



ONE-MAN

KAUFFM

CRAIG KAUFFMAN

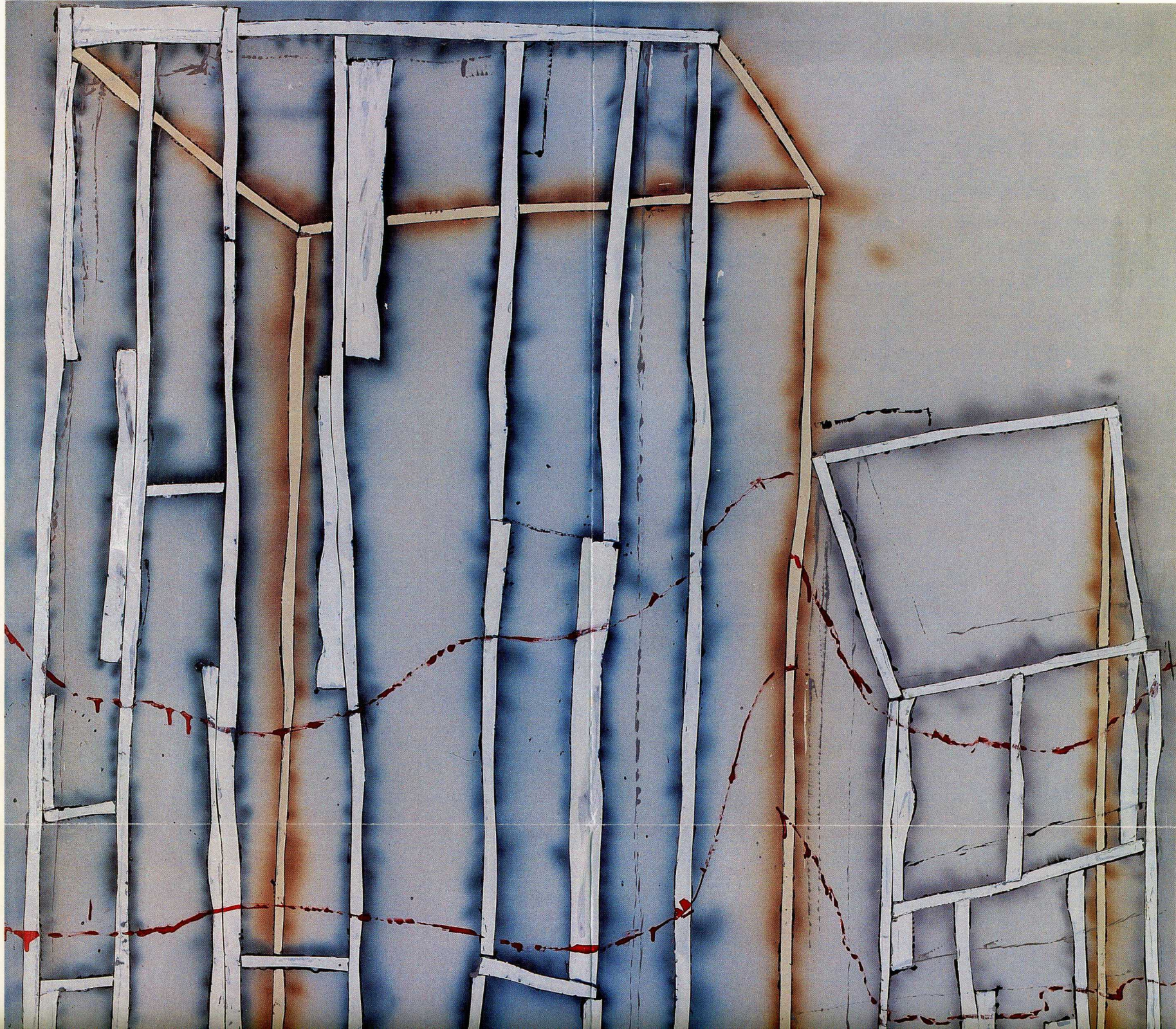
FROM MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1962

FERUS GALLERY

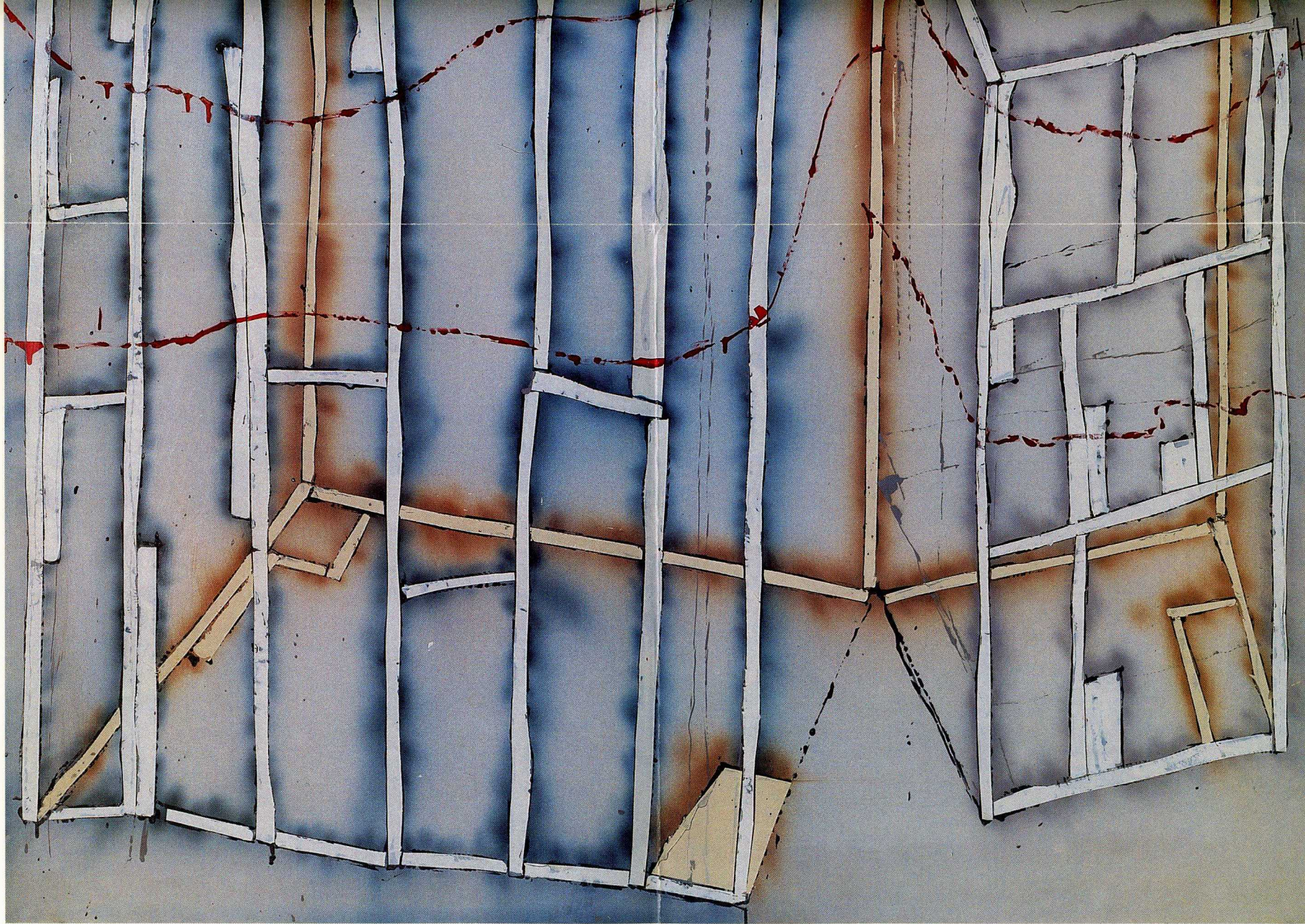
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

born 1932
(10-6-67)

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA



CAGE #1, 1987, acrylic on polyester, 62" x 49 3/4"



CRAIG KAUFFMAN: NEW PAINTINGS

4 June–2 July 1988 Reception: Saturday, 4 June, 4–6 pm. ASHER•FAURE 612 North Almont Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90069 (213) 271-3665

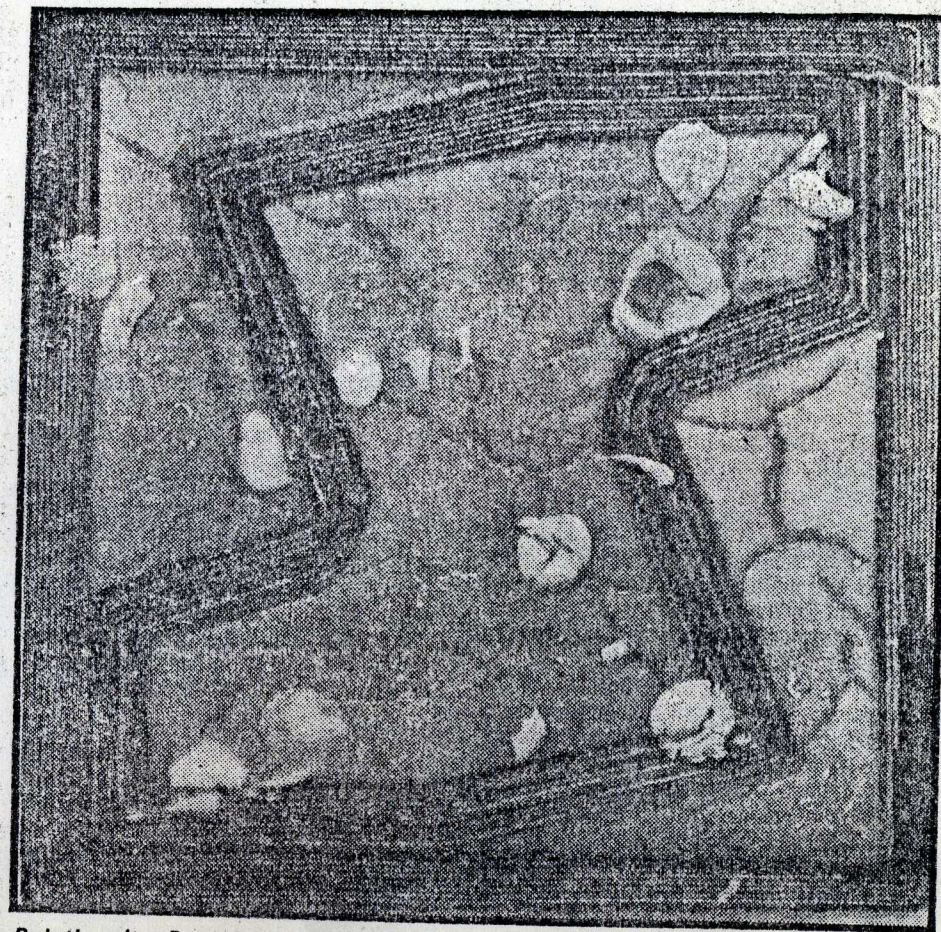
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JUL 12 1978

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
MUSEUM OF ARTArt

Artists in the '70s: Free to See and Be Seen

BY WILLIAM WILSON



Painting by Pat Hogan on view at the L.A. Institute of Contemporary Art.

● Until the '70s, modern art excited its audience for reasons that stood outside the actual and direct experience of art objects. It was assumed that various categories of activity—broadly divided into Expressionism and Formalism—represented efforts that were getting somewhere. Formalism was to advance to the ultimate purification of the art object. Expressionism would arrive at visual statements that were the distilled essence of states of mind and feeling.

Thus, the involved viewer saw individual works as part of a larger pattern. An artist was thought to be obliged to contribute to an evolutionary cycle.

This idea worked fine for several decades until it started to dawn on interested parties that the dynamic cycles were repetitious and the results tended to be predictable, especially when applied to traditional forms like painting, sculpture and drawing.

The realization precipitated changes.

Part of this change came from an attitudinal rebellion by artists themselves. They felt somehow their basic commitment to private and individual expression

So art in the '70s sloughed off in whatever directions necessary to get out from under conventional theoretical analysis. Some branches went political, such as the feminist movement. Others opted for means of expression not susceptible to traditional perception, such as video and performance media. More conventional artists revolted quietly, getting into forms of realism and narrative art, modes that modernist critics find agonizingly impenetrable.

The results of this somewhat anarchistic revolt against systematized perception have been confusing only those who deserve to be confused. In the main, the outcome has proved salubrious.

We have been returned to the issue of quality, confronted again with the demands of holistic perception and forced to reevaluate.

Certainly such a climate is responsible, for example, for the belated recognition currently accorded Saul Steinberg at the Whitney Museum in New York. Certainly this is appropriate. Steinberg is about the only artist around to rivet our attention in the same way Picasso once did. Pottier is

appreciation of all manner of art and artists. We need no other standards whereby to appreciate artists like Bob Graham and Robert Helm than the straightforward recognition of self-evident excellence. If "The Treasures of Tutankhamun" appears to be more "relevant" and "contemporary" than anything else around, so be it.

What, however, has happened to the artists previously identified with the Establishment? Naturally a great many are still plodding along filling out forms like so many time-serving civil servants. The more honestly creative seem to have taken advantage of the weather to loosen their corsets. (Or, conversely, loosen their corsets thus changing the weather. Artists, after all, still make the art.)

Frank Stella, the quintessential Establishment artist of the 1960s, is

Kauffman's paintings are composed of blank horizontals and verticals outlined with informal dabs of color. They blow out previously sacrosanct tenets of modernism by not "adhering to the flatness of the picture plane." Kauffman's color strokes imply shadows. They sometimes run obliquely. Subject matter is suggested as a whole range of modern art heroes, Matisse, Mondrian, Diebenkorn and Ron Davis, to name a few. Here the hip, cool-school artist exposes his love of tradition, elegant eccentricity and perceptual puzzles. He contradicts theoretical expectations of neatly ordered advances. He says to hell with it and makes some highly agreeable paintings in the process.

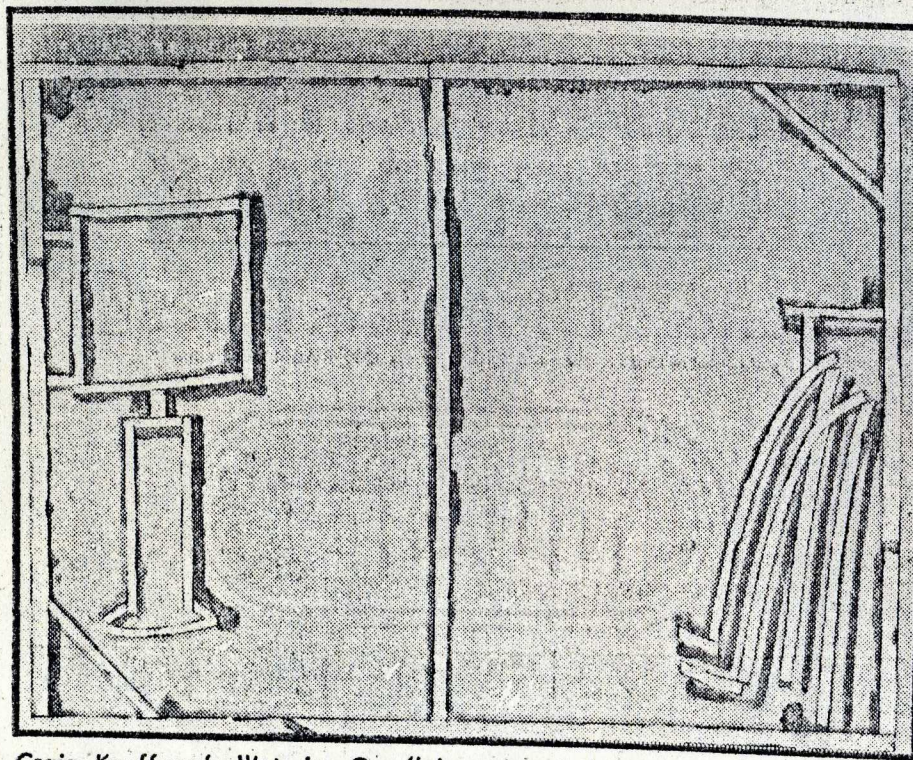
mate purification of the art object. Expressionism would arrive at visual statements that were the distilled essence of states of mind and feeling.

Thus, the involved viewer saw individual works as part of a larger pattern. An artist was thought to be obliged to contribute to an evolutionary cycle.

This idea worked fine for several decades until it started to dawn on interested parties that the dynamic cycles were repetitious and the results tended to be predictable, especially when applied to traditional forms like painting, sculpture and drawing.

The realization precipitated changes.

Part of this change came from an attitudinal rebellion by artists themselves. They felt somehow their basic commitment to private and individual expression had gotten sucked into a theoretician-dominated realm, straitjacketing creativity and turning art into something as bland and insidiously impersonal as a multinational corporation.



Craig Kauffman's "Interior Grey" in series at Arco Center for Visual Arts.

and performance media. More conventional artists revolted quietly, getting into forms of realism and narrative art, modes that modernist critics find agonizingly impenetrable.

The results of this somewhat anarchistic revolt against systematized perception have been confusing only those who deserve to be confused. In the main, the outcome has proved salubrious.

We have been returned to the issue of quality, confronted again with the demands of holistic perception and forced to reevaluate.

Certainly such a climate is responsible, for example, for the belated recognition currently accorded Saul Steinberg at the Whitney Museum in New York. Certainly this is appropriate. Steinberg is about the only artist around to rivet our attention in the same way Picasso once did. Better, it is a triumph for aesthetic democracy. An artist sometimes dismissed as an "illustrator" has cracked that silly barrier between "graphic" and "fine" art.

Out here we have been permitted fresh

appreciation of all manner of art and artists. We need no other standards whereby to appreciate artists like Bob Graham and Robert Helm than the straightforward recognition of self-evident excellence. If "The Treasures of Tutankhamun" appears to be more "relevant" and "contemporary" than anything else around, so be it.

What, however, has happened to the artists previously identified with the Establishment? Naturally a great many are still plodding along filling out forms like so many time-serving civil servants. The more honestly creative seem to have taken advantage of the weather to loosen their corsets. (Or, conversely, loosen their corsets thus changing the weather. Artists, after all, still make the art.)

Frank Stella, the quintessential Establishment artist of the '60s, currently is dazzling critics flocking to Ft. Worth Art Museum to see his lush, eccentric and distinctly nonpolemical paintings.

Locally we have two exhibitions of Establishment-identified artists who seem to me clearly affected (although not transformed) by an ambience of greater artistic self-determination.

Both are nominally abstract artists. Craig Kauffman is a veteran California-based master with an international reputation gained mainly in the '60s when he made large, yummy vacuum-pressed plastic objects identified with Finish Fetish and Kalifornia Kool. Now he is showing, of all things, 15 large paintings on silk in a series titled "Interiors" at Arco Center to May 27.

Pat Hogan is an artistic generation younger than Kauffman, a recipient of the New Talent Award given by the County Museum of Art Contemporary Arts Council and, at very least, regarded as a solid professional in conventional critical terms. He shows 13 smallish paintings at the Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art to May 12.

The principal common ground shared by these two rather dissimilar artists at the moment is that each is bending the means of abstract art to ends they deem worthy rather than toward once-approved "directions." If you subject either to formal or art-historical analysis, you come up with a mess.

Kauffman's paintings are composed of blank horizontals and verticals outlined with informal dabs of color. They blow out previously sacrosanct tenets of modernism by not "adhering to the flatness of the picture plane." Kauffman's color strokes imply shadows. They sometimes run obliquely. Subject matter is suggested as a whole range of modern art heroes. Matisse. Mondrian. Diebenkorn and Ron Davis, to name a few. Here the hip, cool-school artist exposes his love of tradition, elegant eccentricity and perceptual puzzles. He contradicts theoretical expectations of neatly ordered advances. He says to hell with it and makes some highly agreeable paintings in the process.

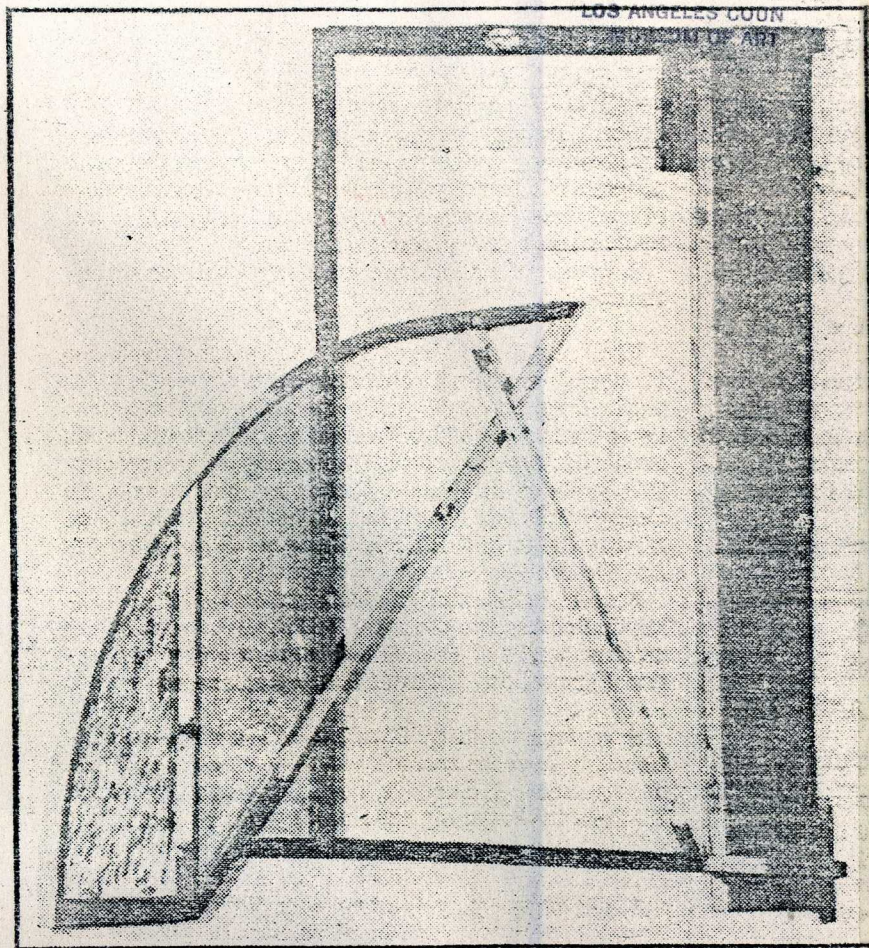
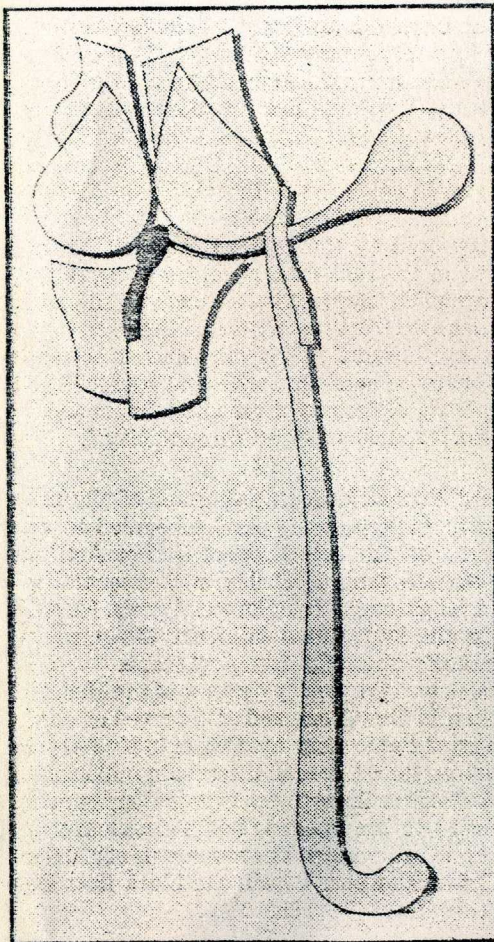
Hogan is a man with awesome personal gumption. He's always painted from a wheelchair. He has never solicited the slightest indulgence or critical concession on account of his physical handicaps. He wanted to make it like any other artist and has done so on the merits of his work.

It used to be rather strictly formal. Now we are sobered by deeply felt insight that is, consistent with Hogan's established artistic persona, universal rather than idiosyncratic.

His paintings consist of painted lengths of rope tracking the edge of the canvas for several layers, then broken into a kind of zigzag emblem shape with metaphysical tensions. The whole is covered in a waxy material that sometimes blisters and erodes. The paintings are at once as rational as platonic "universals" and as primitive as awesomely simple aboriginal art. Hogan has reintroduced an element of artistic intensity that was banned from art when he came to the scene. He made a private decision about a very public formulation of art and his work profited thereby.

Not every artist has used the '70s situation as creatively as Kauffman or Hogan. Many have seen its let's-step-back-and-look-this-over quality as an excuse to drop all standards or embrace door-nail-dead conventions. That misses the positive point.

Arr has once again refused standardization. We have to take it as a fresh challenge every time and expect to be surprised and upset by it. Otherwise art is not working. ●



A HEARTFELT SHOWING OF KAUFFMAN

BY WILLIAM WILSON

The phrase "telltale heart" sounds like a snippet from a slightly dated love song. Add a word and it becomes the title of a classic horror tale by Edgar Allan Poe. "Tell Tale Heart" also happens to be the name of the earliest painting in a stunning comprehen-



TONY DELAP

ture was someplace else. The truest mecca was Paris. The liveliest was New York. San Francisco was closest.

The first "Tell Tale Heart" alludes openly to Arshile Gorky. A second version takes the title, "Git Le Couer," which probably associates with a Parisian Left Bank street that was a favorite hangout of the Beat Poets. It is now about 1962—and Kauffman's painterliness has given way to an erotic suavity of shapes back painted on glass. The work is clearly an allusion to Marcel Duchamp's cryptic masterpiece, "The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors Even."

Does that mean Kauffman was an artistic virtuoso with no more talent than it

"Git le coeur or Tell Tale Heart, 2nd Version," 1962-'63, far left, is a focal point of Kauffman's later art. "V.P. Red," acrylic on wood and muslin, right photo, was executed in 1975.

biomorphs through wavy-edged pin-stripe rectangles, vulva-form slots and bulging capsules back-painted with pearlescent and metallic hues worthy of a lowrider in a Malibu sunset.

Boy, are they hard to look at today.

Some hint at physical deterioration. Many have a stale, period-piece look, like metal-foil party hats the morning after. Their chicness puts a gloss of silliness over Kauffman's seriousness. The artist was moving in the direction of environmental and process art finally refined to perfection by Robert Irwin and James Turrell.

Passing time will likely redeem some of Kauffman's plastics. He, like many another surfer on the spirit of the '60s, chose to leap forward by stepping backward in the next decade. Kauffman revived the original romance of being a painter. Plastics gave way to structures of wood resembling cockeyed traditional stretcher bars partly covered with muslin. Struts are painted with bright colors or false shadows. Muslin is mottled with hued fields or, lately, wonderful clunky arabesques that occasionally resemble a leg or shoe.

These alternate with what look like fully and partly painted impersonations of the structures. They bear titles like "Cite Rouge" and "Paris Studio."

L.A. residents who can't get enough of Kauffman's art, or conversely, are satisfied with less of it, can find sustenance in two satellite exhibitions in local commercial galleries.

Asher/Faure shows six substantial recent paintings that elaborate his reverse-stretcher-bar illusions into excuses for richly coloristic painting-for-its-own sake, translating pigment into lambent light reminiscent of watercolor. The quality is especially evident in the pink field of "Double Profile." The little gallery has prime examples on view to April

A HEARTFELT SHOWING OF KAUFFMAN

BY WILLIAM WILSON

The phrase "telltale heart" sounds like a snippet from a slightly dated love song. Add a word and it becomes the title of a classic horror tale by Edgar Allan Poe. "Tell Tale Heart" also happens to be the name of the earliest painting in a stunning comprehensive survey exhibition devoted to the art of Craig Kauffman.

It is on view to May 3 at the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art. The accompanying catalogue could use somewhat more color in both its reproductions and its essay. That is about the last critical thing one will be obliged to say about a showing that closely approaches an ideal model for such exercises. With just 41 paintings and plastic reliefs it is tightly selected, deftly organized and beautifully installed. Various medals should be showered on the museum, curator Robert McDonald and the free-floating support group, the Fellows of Contemporary Art, which initiated and sponsored the project. They have become about the deftest art angels hereabouts.

The exhibition triggers encapsulating insight and slow rumination on the career of a germinal figure in the orbiting of L.A. art in the '60s.

Kauffman was born in Los Angeles and will be 49 Tuesday. Happy birthday. He went to Eagle Rock High, studied architecture at USC and art at UCLA. Something of an artistic prodigy, he was included in a group exhibition at the Felix Landau Gallery at age 19. He retains the soft good looks of a Van Johnson relieved by a mischievous snaggle-toothed smile. As a real home-town boy, he was a natural inheritor of the indigenous L.A.



PHOTO BY TONY DeLAP

Craig Kauffman

sensibility of hot-rods, cute chicks and having fun.

"Tell Tale Heart," painted in 1957, however, reveals something more. The title suggests literary and intellectual interests not always associated with L.A. It reveals both amazing virtuosity and unusual sophistication for the time. Even more impressive is the sense of absolute self-knowledge and determination embodied in the small painting. It is as if Kauffman said to himself, "Everything I do from now on will be a logical extension of this painting." The adherence to that implied vow revealed is almost frightening. The mordant humor of the title is one of the subtlest and most self-aware bits of art-wit on record.

Poe's short story is about a passionate murderer who dismembers his victim's body and buries the parts around the house. He is undone by the feeling he can hear the heart beating under the floorboards. Kauffman's art is always about emotion tempered by structure.

L.A. people of Kauffman's generation shared a profound conviction. Real cul-

ture was someplace else. The truest mecca was Paris. The liveliest was New York. San Francisco was closest.

The first "Tell Tale Heart" alludes openly to Arshile Gorky. A second version takes the title, "Git Le Couer," which probably associates with a Parisian Left Bank street that was a favorite hangout of the Beat Poets. It is now about 1962—and Kauffman's painterliness has given way to an erotic suavity of shapes back painted on glass. The work is clearly an allusion to Marcel Duchamp's cryptic masterpiece, "The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors Even."

Does that mean Kauffman was an artistic virtuoso with no more talent than it takes to paraphrase artists he adored from afar? No it doesn't mean that any more than when Stuart Davis "colonialized" Cubism. It does mean that the poetry and romance of Kauffman's art grows from an L.A. kid in love with the idea of being a "real" artist, of having a "career."

Out here that meant translating the past history of modern art into L.A. slang. That was what happened among artists of the legendary Ferus Gallery here in the '60s. They learned to speak the language of serious art with a local accent.

Kauffman's seminal contribution to that achievement remains his best-known work—relief paintings executed on vacuum-formed or pressed Plexiglas. They played a key part in the greening of L.A. into the home of the "Cool School" and the "Finish Fetish." Along with Ed Ruscha's Standard stations, Billy Al Bengston's "dento" paintings and Joe Goode's lonesome milk bottles they became trademarks of L.A. '60s art. We were brash, ironical, trendy, tough, laid-back, Zen, and, of course, utterly hip.

A lot of trashy art boogied by on the look. A lot of serious art was mistaken for stylish glitter. Kauffman's plastics evolved from bright wind-tunnel erotic

stretchers partly covered with muslin. Struts are painted with bright colors or false shadows. Muslin is mottled with hued fields or, lately, wonderful clunky arabesques that occasionally resemble a leg or shoe.

These alternate with what look like fully and partly painted impersonations of the structures. They bear titles like "Cite Rouge" and "Paris Studio."

L.A. residents who can't get enough of Kauffman's art, or conversely, are satisfied with less of it, can find sustenance in two satellite exhibitions in local commercial galleries.

Asher/Faure shows six substantial recent paintings that elaborate his reverse-stretcher-bar illusions into excuses for richly coloristic painting-for-its-own sake, translating pigment into lambent light reminiscent of watercolor. The quality is especially evident in the pink field of "Double Profile." The little gallery has prime examples on view to April 18 at 8221 Santa Monica Blvd.

On the face of it, only a hard-core Kauffman addict would venture into the bowels of industrial downtown for seven lithographs and 16 or so small scraggly pen drawings. The faithful will be rewarded at Cirrus with prints in a medium that adjusts felicitously to the artist's present concerns. The drawings offer rather remarkable revelations about how he manipulates space from flat to deep to bird's-eye. That carries on to April 30 at 542 S. Alameda.

Recent Kauffman brings the image of Brando in "Last Tango in Paris" to mind. Not the dirty stuff. The existential loner seasoned to wry self-awareness. Kauffman's "Tango" has a happy ending. The L.A. prodigy and hot-doggie has become a man of the world. He lives half-time in New York, painting as Theolonius Monk plays. He improvises wittily within the now-traditional structure of old radical jazz. He is as urbane as Matisse, if Matisse had been touched with L.A. perversity. Here we paraphrase Diebenkorn for a few bars, then devote an acid passage to the New York kids making something called Abstract Illusionism.

It comes out pure Kauffman playing variations on that old tune, "Tell Tale Heart." □

Craig Kauffman (1932) Los Angeles,
California

Yellow-Orange 1965, unsigned

Acrylic on plexiglass 90 x 46½

M.66.1

Craig Kauffman was born in Los Angeles in 1932 and presently lives there. He studied at the University of Southern California, School of Architecture, 1950-1952, and attained his Master of Arts degree from the University of California at Los Angeles in 1956. He has travelled extensively in Europe and is currently teaching at the University of California, Irvine. He has had several one man exhibitions at the Ferus Gallery in Los Angeles and the Pace Gallery in New York, and has been selected to participate in numerous group exhibitions, including the United States entry to the 1967 V Paris Biennale.

The Kauffman piece in the Museum collection is a vacuum molded plexiglass relief. From an orange background a single yellow organic image projects in shallow relief. The image is outlined with a thin lavender line. Although the image does not represent any specific thing, it strongly suggests a physiological organ. By his combination of an organic, biological image and an industrial technique, Kauffman creates visual and associational irony in this piece.

The artist makes a plywood mold for his final object. He then takes the mold to a vacuum molding plant and has the piece fabricated industrially. In the case of the piece in our collection, he had it made of clear plexiglass which he then spray-painted from the back. It is no mean feat technically for Kauffman to be able to control spray paint to such an extent that he can create an extraordinary evenness of surface texture and color, which is totally in keeping with the kind of mechanical finish already established by the industrial fabrication. (No one knows just how the lavender line is applied so perfectly. It would be virtually an impossible task to mask off so many curves.¹) In some of his later works Kauffman, while he still makes the molds, has the pieces themselves made out of colored plexiglass, removing himself one step further away from the traditional role of the artist as a maker of things. Many artists today are challenging this conventional notion of the artist and are sending their ideas out to factories to be made in the belief that it is the concept that is paramount in a work of art, not who makes it.

Kauffman's work also challenges traditional definitions of painting and sculpture. Is it a painting or a sculpture? It hangs on the wall like a painting and is painted, but it is also three-dimensional. By approaching their work with attitudes which fall outside the established categories of either painting or sculpture, Kauffman and many of the most radical of the contemporary artists force whole new modes of vision on the viewer. Old definitions no longer suffice, and we are forced to stretch our perceptual and intel-

1. Conversation with Kauffman's dealer, Irving Blum, October, 1967.

lectual evaluations to meet new situations. Finally it is unimportant whether or not we can answer the question, "Is it a painting or a sculpture?" This question is irrelevant to the artists. What is important is that the radical approaches of some contemporary artists make it possible for the viewer to expand his ability to think and see. The artist enriches our lives by enabling us to confront his vision, which is one we probably could never have on our own.

Because of its single, simple image and its straightforward use of an industrial material, we can readily comprehend the piece in its entirety. (In a Pollock drip painting, in contrast, we can never fully comprehend the complexities of the surface.) But, while Kauffman's piece is on the one hand straightforward and able to be thoroughly grasped, it also has an element of mystery because of his sensitivity to the nature of the material used. The plexiglass has a highly reflective surface, so that as we move slightly in viewing it, the material seems to ripple, waver, almost de-materialize. The more we allow ourselves to become involved in the changing reflections, the more ambiguous and mysterious the plexiglass - which is after all an ordinary industrial product - becomes.

While Kauffman's use of materials here is quite radical and unconventional, his compositional format is still traditional in that it consists of a figure on a ground. His use of colors reinforces the composition, for the figure is painted in a warmer color than the ground. Warmer colors read further forward in space, and by traditional definition a figure must be in front of the ground. In some later pieces Kauffman departs further from the traditional figure-ground relationship by making them all one color and simplifying the format. As a result the pieces read more as a continuous whole than as an image and background, but not completely so, for part of the image still projects forward in relief so that it does not wholly escape reading as a figure.

In still more recent works, the artist has again used two colors, spray painting from behind with such a refined technique that he creates an illusion of the pieces radiating light from within, while in actuality they are lit from without by a single spotlight. The intrinsic expressive qualities of light and reflection themselves have become the paramount issues in Kauffman's work, as they are in the work of other major California artists, from Robert Irwin of the older generation to Jim Turrell and Doug Wheeler of the younger.

In more general terms, Kauffman's work must be considered as part of the Los Angeles scene. There a recognizable aesthetic has developed since the early 1960's, quite independently of New York, which was in the 1950's considered the single most important international art center. Partly in reaction to Abstract Expressionism, whose issues the younger artists felt had already been fully explored, people like Irwin, Price, Bengston, Bell, and Kauffman began to look for new ways of exploiting the abstract idiom. Perhaps in part because of the ready availability of industrial processes and materials of all kinds in the Los Angeles milieu, these artists took advantage of various industrial

methods, using spray paint, glass, plexiglass, aluminum, for their own aesthetic purposes. The resulting works of art have an impeccable quality of surface finish that at first seems impersonal. But once one becomes familiar with the new look of industrial finishes, the highly individual approaches of the artists become strongly apparent. The fanatic concern of the Southern California artists with perfection of surface finish, and indeed some of their actual techniques, like the use of spray paint, have been related to the drag strip and custom car scene, where the care lavished upon an automobile - the application and rubbing down of thirty or forty coats of spray paint - amounts to the same kind of concern that is involved in producing a work of art.²

Together with its willingness to experiment with unconventional materials and a fanatic devotion to perfection of surface, the Southern California aesthetic is characterized by a concern on the part of the artists with the actual processes of perception.³ A willful and concentrated act of perception is required if one is to experience fully the effects of these artists' works. Once they are experienced, they may in some cases seem to vanish - disappear and reappear - pushing one's perceptual responses to the very brink of credibility, and in the end infinitely increasing one's ability to respond to anything in the material world.

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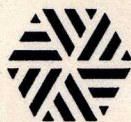
Melinda Terbell
June 1968

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CRAIG KAUFFMAN

THE WORKS GALLERY

Wed, May 3, 1989

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MAY 18 1989

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
MUSEUM OF ART

To: The Art Community

From: The Works Gallery

Contact: Mark Moore, Director, or Christie Fields,

Assistant Director.

(213) 495-2787

Exhibitions:

Craig Kauffman/Recent Work

"Artist/Works III," Group Exhibition

June 1 - July 9, 1989

Opening Reception:

Saturday, June 3, 6 - 9 PM

Related Event:

"Meet the Artist" Lecture Series, with Craig
Kauffman, June 6, 8 PM

Long Beach, CA. --- The Works Gallery will be presenting an exhibition of recent work by Craig Kauffman, a native Californian, who has been recognized as an important international artist since the early 1960s. In his most recent paintings, Kauffman wishes to find, " . . . visual equivalents for states of mind and feelings." The paintings are a culmination of previous and current works. Kauffman creates an ethereal quality upon the canvas with the use of acrylic and iridescent pigment on silk.

Kauffman's work can be found in the permanent collections of such museums as The Museum of Modern Art, The Whitney Museum of

The Works Gallery is open seven days a week: Sunday and Monday 12 - 5 PM
American Art, The Newport Harbor Museum and the Los Angeles
and Tuesday - Saturday 11AM - 7 PM, and by appointment. We are located at
County Museum of Art.


Craig Kauffman also teaches painting at the University of California at Irvine.

FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE OUR FAX NUMBER IS: (213) 495-0370.

The concurrent exhibition is the annual summer group show,
"Artist/Works III," in the main gallery. This exhibit will feature a wide range
of new work by gallery artists: Lita Albuquerque, Peter Alexander, Craig
Antrim, Deanne Belinoff, Larry Bell, Poupee Boccaccio, Hilary Brace, Judith
Davies, Michael Davis, Woods Davy, Tony DeLap, Laddie John Dill, Frank
Dixon, Tom Dowling, Peter Erskine, Candice Gawne, George Geyer, Michael
Hayden, John Paul Jones, Franz Rudolf Knubel, Hoon Hwak, Gary Martin,
Clinton MacKenzie, Jay McCafferty, Jim Morphesis, Eric Orr, Helen Pashgian,
Bruce Richards, Betty Rodger, Judy Stabile, Barbara Sternberger, Craig Cree
Stone, Craig Syverson, Ann Thornycroft, Patricia Turnier, Clark Walding,
and Stephanie Weber.

Related Events: The PCA Long Beach Art Expedition, June 25, 10-6 PM,
for information call (213) 499-7777

Pine Avenue Art Walk, July 6. The Pine Avenue Art
Walks are held on the first Thursday of every month
with Overreact Gallery, System M Restaurant and
Gallery and The Works Gallery.


The Works Gallery is open seven days a week: Sunday and Monday 12 - 5 PM
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106 West Third Street in Long Beach. Please contact Christie Fields or Mark
Moore for photographs or further information at (213) 495-2787.
FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE OUR FAX NUMBER IS: (213) 495-0370.

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The The Art Community

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ALSO - NEW LITHOGRAPHIC EDITIONS BY:

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PETER ALEXANDER - Two large lithographs entitled Chula Vista I and Chula Vista II in editions of thirty. These are two powerful images in shades of black, depicting a deluge-like downpour presenting an ominous visualization of the elements.

MARVIN HARDEN - Two single lithographs and a single triptych, under the title a line, align in mind, a direct indirection by which we find directions out; the act, the very process - an essential transitoriness. Each lithograph bears the same extremely subtle image of a narrow, vertical line in shades of gray, occupying the center. The entire surrounding surface of cream colored paper has been hand scratched by Harden, creating a soft texture.

FOR INFORMATION: Jean Milant, 680-3473

GALLERY HOURS: Tuesday-Friday, 11-5. Saturday 12-4.

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Craig Kauffman
Installation view of Loops exhibition, 2010

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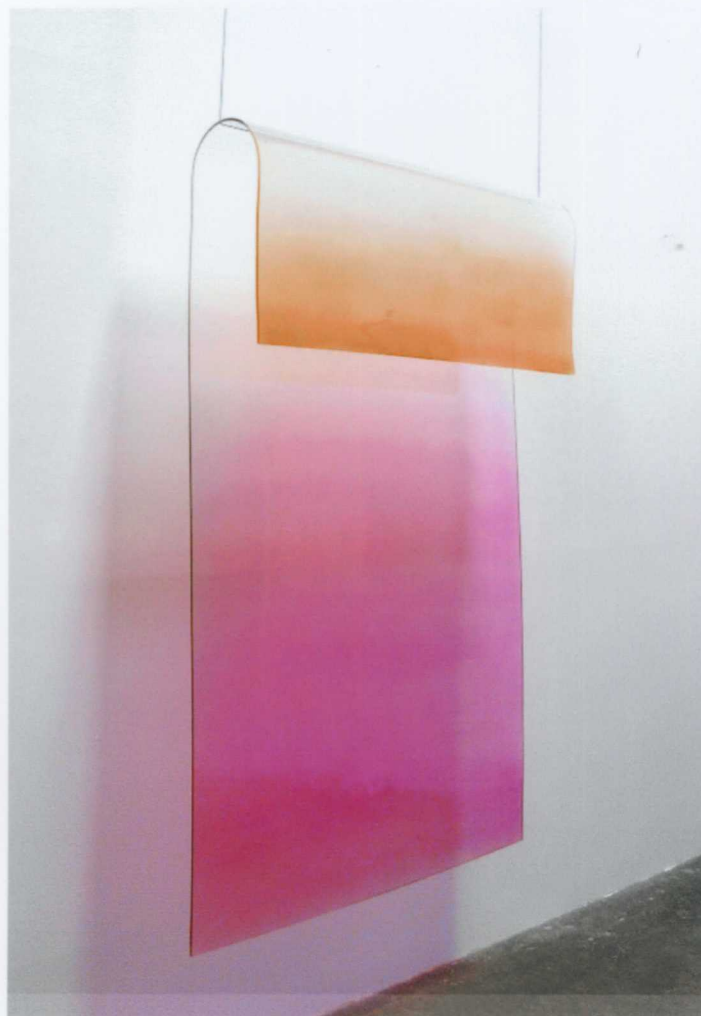
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Installation view of Loops exhibition, 2010

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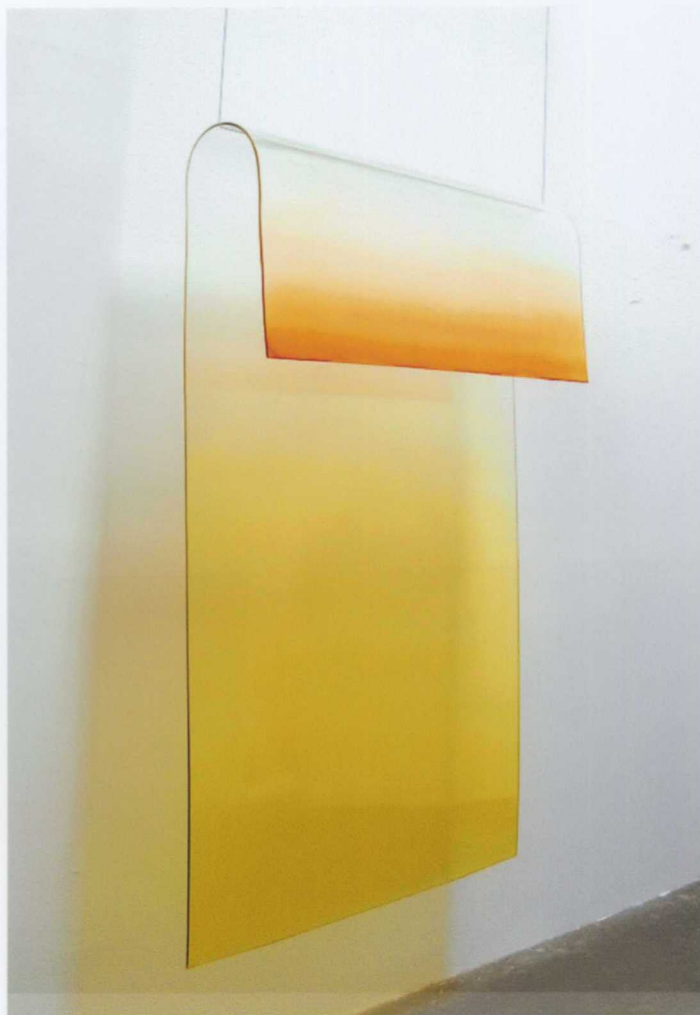
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Craig Kauffman
Untitled, 1969
acrylic lacquer on plastic
73 x 47 1/4 x 9 inches
FKN211

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Craig Kauffman
Untitled, 1969
acrylic lacquer on plastic
73 x 47 1/4 x 9 inches
FKN210

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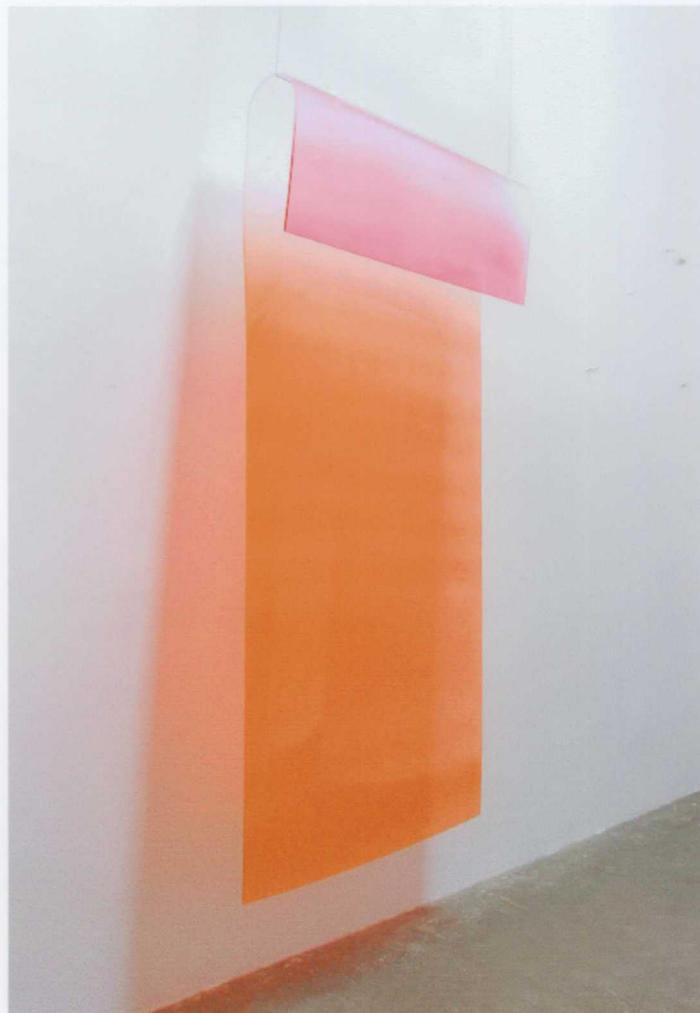
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Craig Kauffman
Untitled, 1969
acrylic lacquer on plastic
94 x 47 1/4 x 9 inches
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Craig Kauffman
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94 x 47 ¼ x 9 inches
FKN212

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Craig Kauffman

select works from the sixties

